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LANGUAGE

AS A MEANS OF

MENTAL CULTURE

AND

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION;

OR

A MANUAL OF THE TEACHER AND THE LEARNER OF LANGUAGES.

BY

C. MARCEL, KNT. LEG. HON.

FRENCH CONSUL.

"L'étude des langues est la première et la plus indispensable de toutes les études."—P. H. SUZANNE.

"Méthodes sont les maîtres des maîtres."—TALLEYRAND.

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ERRATA.

Page 97, Heading, *read* "SECT. VI." *for* "SECT. VII."
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PART THE SECOND.

PRACTICAL AND COMPARATIVE METHOD.

"Les méthodes sont les maîtres des maîtres."—TALLEYRAND.

BOOK VII.

OF WORDS.

"Les mots dans le discours jouent des rôles différents, y remplissent diverses fonctions, d' où la nécessité de les classer."—A. Boniface.*

"Those inquiries may surely be deemed interesting as well as liberal which either search how speech may be naturally resolved; or how, when resolved, it may be again combined."—J. Harris.†

CHAPTER I.

CLASSIFICATION OF WORDS.

Sect. I.—NATURE OF WORDS AND THEIR ADEQUACY TO THE EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT.

The pronunciation, orthography, and meaning of words, their inflections, concord, and arrangement, are the six objects to be studied in order to know a language. All agree on this point; but they differ widely as to the mode of proceeding in the pursuit. With a view to elucidate this subject, we will inquire into the nature and origin of words, will classify them, and carefully examine their degrees of importance.

In our observations we will preserve the technical denominations most generally adopted, imperfect as many of them are; because our object being to facilitate the study of languages, that object might be defeated, if, at the outset, we presented a new grammatical nomenclature; names are of themselves comparatively unimportant. Our chief aim has been to establish

* *Journal Grammatical de la Langue Française.*
† *Hermes or Philosophical Inquiry, &c.*

a classification of words on clear and general principles, that it may be auxiliary to the understanding of the elementary works usually put in the hands of learners.

Discourse includes four objects of consideration;—*realities* (whether concrete or abstract), *thoughts*, *articulate speech*, and *written expression*. Realities are represented by thoughts, thoughts by articulate speech, and articulate speech is represented by written expression. Words, the elements of language, are the signs of ideas, which are themselves the elements of thoughts.

Two things are to be considered in the nature of words, *the sign* and *the idea;* the one, material, which is appreciable by the senses; the other, immaterial, which is appreciable by the mind alone; the one, the body; the other, the soul of the word. From the intimate association existing between the idea and the thing it represents, either of these may be considered as the signification of the word. It may be said that words represent, primarily, our thoughts, and secondarily, the external objects of our thoughts, whether our consciousness of those objects be the result of perception or conception. Hence we will, throughout, speak of words as indifferently signifying ideas or things.

The sign also assumes a double form; it may be audible or visible, as it is spoken or written. But although this second form was, in alphabetical languages, originally intended to signify the articulate words and not the ideas, it may be considered as standing for the latter in foreign languages; because the meaning of their written words is usually ascertained by translation, without reference to the sounds which they represent. The essentials of a word are consequently three,—its *pronunciation*, *orthography*, and *signification:* the complete knowledge of it implies the inseparable association in the mind of these three constituent notions.

The use of one common language determines the nationality of a people, and binds them in a fraternal bond; the people, in their turn, give the language the impress of their ideas and feelings, of their disposition and genius. Hence it is that the collection of the words and phraseology of a language represents the ideological character of a nation; it is, as it were, the picture of its intellectuality, the criterion by which we may judge of its degree of civilisation. The picture will be faithful, if it represent all that is in the original, that is to say, the language will be perfectly suited to its purpose, if it contain

a distinct expression for each idea, and no expression without an idea.

Although it may be safely affirmed that no language has attained this degree of perfection, and that, in their inadequacy to represent thought, all differ only in degree, yet it will be found that, in general, they abound in terms expressive of ideas which are congenial with the character of the people who speak them, or which relate to the arts in which they excel. The tribes who have made little moral or intellectual progress have often many words for material things and few for metaphysical notions, while nations advanced in civilisation are rich in abstract terms. That the English, the French, and the Italians have, for example, respectively supplied other nations with nautical, military, and musical terms, sufficiently shows their advancement in the different arts to which these terms belong. The proneness of the English to humour and ridicule, as proved by their taste for caricatures and their acknowledged superiority in this branch of the graphic art, is also strikingly illustrated by the richness of their vocabulary for the expression of these feelings.

The differences in ideas and forms of expression are very considerable, even between two nations who speak kindred dialects and pursue the same path of civilisation, as the English and the German, the French and the Italian. But the number of these differences is beyond conception when the two nations speak languages which have not a common origin, or when they differ in their religious creeds, political institutions, social habits, industrial pursuits, and scientific attainments, as is more particularly the case with the modern and the ancient nations, with the people of Europe and the original inhabitants of the other parts of the world.

However, though the stock of ideas in a nation is generally commensurate with its vocabulary, it should not be invariably inferred that an idea or a feeling is unknown to a people who have not a special sign for it. There are not, for example, special English words corresponding to *chaussure* (a generic term signifying covering for the feet), *entresol* (an apartment between two floors), *élite* (the select portion of a community), *dizaine* (a substantive signifying "about ten"), *perclus* (who has not the use of his limbs), *prévenant* (ready to do a service before it is asked), *outré* (carried to an extreme), *coucher* (to go to bed), *panser* (to dress a wound), *chez* (to or at the house of), *supérieurement*

(in a superior manner); nor are there special French words corresponding to *perusal, fun, consistency, tedious, fond, successful, to stand, to mind, to ride, along, shortly, cheap,* &c.; yet the ideas expressed by these French and English words, and by a thousand others of the same kind, are equally familiar to the two nations. The English surely have not exclusively the privileges of *comfort* and *a home*, were even these two expressive words peculiar to their language as believed by some; the word *comfort* is of Italian origin and is much used by Marot and other French writers of his time. If, however, this mode of arguing were correct, the word *uncomfortable* would be more likely to denote a state of feeling experienced only in England, since this word is really untranslatable. With regard to the word *home*, it does not, in our opinion, indicate a greater predilection for domestic enjoyments than exists in other countries, nor is it always more expressive than the *chez soi* of the French. But further, the word *home* loses all its characteristic significancy, when contrasted with its counterparts, *abroad* and *absentee*, two expressions exclusively English, which relate to prevailing practices in these islands: and it is a notorious fact that the English, the Scotch, and the Irish, are the most emigrating, colonising, travelling, and *out of home* people on the face of the earth; they are to be seen in all the high-ways and by-ways of the two hemispheres; few, in fact, stay at home, who have the means of going abroad. That they keep to their homes, when on British ground, is owing to their climate rather than to their inclination.

The representation of ideas, like the alphabetical representation of vocal sounds and articulations, is extremely incomplete; but its incompleteness, different from that of our alphabetical system, is unavoidable. The elementary sounds and articulations of any language being very limited, it would have been easy to attach a distinct sign to every vocal element; whereas the indefinite multiplicity of the ideas which the human mind can conceive renders a perfect ideological representation impossible. The shades of our thoughts are so delicate and so various that they cannot all be represented by particular signs. This deficiency, however, is easily supplied by the inflections of the voice and the other signs of the language of action, by the substitution of the different parts of speech one for another, by the same words being made to stand for several distinct ideas, by the practice of borrowing from other languages, finally, by

combinations of words, circumlocutions, and figurative expressions, which cause languages to gain in grace and imagery what they lose in precision and laconism; all which peculiarities unfortunately add to the difficulty of their acquisition, whether the learner aims at translating them into his own language, or at using them as the vehicles of his thoughts.

A complete and perfect language, were its existence possible, would not perhaps be desirable; for the expression of thought by assuming all the dry accuracy of scientific nomenclatures, would lose the charms which our imperfect idioms derive from the varied inflections of the voice and from figurative language. There could be no diversity of style, if, each idea having its proper term, no option were left in the use of words and forms of speech.

Were languages much more copious than they now are, the human mind would find it a difficult task to acquire a ready command of their entire vocabularies. As new words are daily introduced, others are allowed to grow obsolete; and, limited as the number of elements is, we do not generally know three fourths of the terms which they contain. Nevertheless, whatever be the extent of the nomenclature of a language, learners should endeavour to master as large a number of its words as they can, and should especially ascertain their various and true meanings; for the acquisition of words without corresponding ideas is prejudicial in various ways to their possessor.

SECT. II.—ORIGIN OF THE PARTS OF SPEECH.

As the study of words, to be beneficial, must be founded on a knowledge of their functions, we will, with a view to classify them in this respect, briefly advert to their gradual formation in primitive languages.

The term *primitive* does not exclusively apply to the language of the first man; this archetypal vehicle of thought, adapted, as it undoubtedly was, to the peculiar circumstances in which our first parents were placed, must necessarily have been limited to the representation of the few objects with which they were surrounded and the emotions of love and gratitude which filled their hearts,—a more extensive vehicle could only have embarrassed and confused them. It must have been poor, indeed, destitute as it

was of all the metaphysical and technical terminology which arises from the infinite relations of society, the progress of arts and sciences, and all the refinements of civilisation. In the absence also of a written form, which might have given it permanence, its original words must soon have been lost, or at least, much altered and corrupted. Hence, in the infancy of society and in different localities, men were often reduced to the necessity of forming new signs of ideas, which constituted the elements of various primitive languages. Social intercourse was so circumscribed that multiplicity of dialects must have been a prevailing feature of those early periods. Unity of language among large communities is the slow result of advanced civilisation; the less civilised men are, the more numerous their idioms. Many distinct languages are found in comparatively small spaces in the countries whose inhabitants are in a state of barbarism: the ridge of the Caucasus,* Abyssinia,† America,‡ the Malayan Peninsula, the Indian Archipelago,§ offer abundant and convincing proofs of this fact. The progress of philological inquiry is constantly impeded by the discovery of languages which neither in their genius nor in their structure can be identified with any other known idiom.

We remarked, when treating of the vocal organs and of the signs of our ideas, that articulate language is a necessary consequence of man's constitution: he has received with the faculty of thought the corresponding faculty of speech; by which we mean the power of spontaneously forming words by imitation. However people may differ respecting the interpretation of the sacred words in reference to the first language, no one can deny that man is endowed with, and freely uses, the power of making and extending speech in proportion to his acquisitions, to his social wants, and to the development of his intellect. It is in virtue of this power that all articulate languages have been formed. The various words which constitute their wealth have been introduced but very slowly; and the different parts of speech have undoubtedly been the result of successive improvements, consequent on mental advancement. The history of language is involved in that of the mind: philology and psychology are kindred sciences.

* Ernest Renan, *De l'Origine du Langage.*
† Jobi Ludolfi, *Historia Æthiopica.*
‡ A. de Humboldt, *Vue des Cordilières, Introd.*
§ J. Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago.*

Before man could effectually use his power of making words he had already availed himself of another mode of expression,—the language of action,—which was coeval with the first moments of his existence, and subservient to the formation of conventional articulate signs. Among the elements of this language may be reckoned the varied modulations of his cries. By the law of his organisation he has always uttered vocal sounds expressive of certain emotions. These audible signs, which are, for the most part, inarticulate and monosyllabic, belong therefore to the natural, not to the artificial language. They have been, under the name of interjections, improperly classed among the conventional signs. Different from words, which are the offspring of the will, interjections are instinctive and involuntary: they arise from the sensitive being, as does the sound from a vibrating bell. Infants indulge in exclamatory syllables, long before they can speak. The language of animals, as exhibited in the various modulations of their cries, is nothing but a natural system of interjections.

Interjections are restricted in their use to the indication of feelings and emotions; beyond this they are inadequate for social communication; but it is presumable that they facilitated the transition from the natural to an artificial language; and man, in resorting to his creative power of speech, in order to express a more extensive range of ideas, originally modified these by articulation. There is every reason to suppose that the first articulate words which he uttered were, for the most part, monosyllabic *Substantives*, names of things which were within the reach of his perceptive powers, and which, from the varied sensations arising therefrom, called forth his mental activity and imitative powers. In conformity with these dictates of nature, the first use which Adam made of the gift of speech, that is, the power of making articulate signs for his ideas, was to name individual animals, as each species came within his notice, by words either analogous to their cries or indicative of their peculiar nature, so far as this could be effected by articulate sounds. He probably continued to give to the other objects of sense which engaged his attention names that characterised them by their most striking properties.

Concrete substantives, which form the basis of language, preceded those which are abstract; for, as the union of the properties and substratum precedes their resolution, it is natural to suppose that the concrete notions of things existed before the abstract

conception was formed by comparison and analysis. It may further be presumed that substantives, significant at first of particular objects, were soon after applied indifferently to one or several things of the same kind; hence general nouns arose, from which a better acquaintance with the nature of things and a due perception of their resemblances and differences led to the distinction of individuals, species, and genera, and to the consequent introduction of corresponding terms. The Javanese language, one of the Malayan family, illustrates this progress in the introduction of words; it shows the utmost deficiency in generic expressions; for example, it has no term equivalent to *metal* or *animal*, nor any specific word corresponding to *quadruped*, *bird*, *insect*, or *reptile*, although possessing several names for each metal and for familiar animals, as the *elephant*, the *horse*, the *dog*.*

After substantives had passed from the individual to the specific and generic sense, it became necessary to distinguish one object from another of the same kind, and to state the particular manner in which each affected the senses; this double consideration led men, by an act of abstraction, to notice, and then name, in connection with the substantives, the peculiar qualities, properties, or other modes of being, which characterised one or a number of the things represented by those substantives. These terms of comparison, expressive of the attributes of things, constitute that class of words which are called, *Adjectives*. As substantives were introduced to discriminate between objects of different kinds, so adjectives served to discriminate between objects of the same kind.

These two species of words—substantives and adjectives—necessarily enter into the nomenclature of all languages, because, in every community, things and their properties are made the subject of discourse. These two species of words are indispensable for the expression of a judgment: the first signifies the subject, or the thing of which we think; the second, the attribute which we perceive in that thing, or which we affirm of it.

But it was not enough in the expression of a judgment to name the thing which is the subject of thought and the property attributed to it, a word was needed to specify clearly and distinctly the connection and the mode of relation between the subject and its attribute. This third conventional sign is the *Verb;* it forms with the other two a proposition, or the expression

* See J. Crawfurd, *History of the Indian Archipelago*.

of a complete judgment. The name given to that part of speech, *verbum* (the word), sufficiently shows its importance. It may be conjectured that the first verb served only to affirm the existence of the attribute in the subject, as expressed by *to be;* but, by a natural tendency to expansion, it has been made, in process of time, to denote, besides this affirmation, the attribute itself, as well as time, person, and number: such is the present condition of our verbs. It is thus that this part of speech, which, in its origin, was, perhaps, the most simple, has become the most complex, in consequence of the accessories of different kinds which have been successively added to its generic meaning; and, although it was introduced in the infancy of articulate language, it is to be presumed that a very long interval of time must have elapsed before its moods, tenses, and persons were definitively fixed upon, as they exist in the most improved idioms. "All this composition," says President de Brosses, "is the work not of a premeditated combination, nor of an elaborate philosophy, but of instinctive metaphysics."*

Substantives, adjectives, and verbs, the primary and indispensable elements of simple sentences, were, in the course of time, found insufficient to follow the complex operations of the mind; they were, consequently, modified, abbreviated, or combined into other words which served as accessories in the expression of more complicated thoughts. These secondary words, however, were not always used separately; the analysis of language sufficiently proves that, in many instances, they were made to coalesce with primary words, in order to modify their signification and determine their grammatical functions.

Of the secondary words, *Articles* and other determinative signs must have been among the first which were introduced; because the progress of intellectual intercourse early required that the subject of thought be determined independently of quality or property, and that general terms be occasionally extended or restricted in their application. By means of determinatives men were enabled to designate particular individuals without having recourse to proper names, a system of representation which would have been impracticable from the multiplicity of terms required. Particular names would, in general, be useless; for the objects of our thoughts are not so much the individuals themselves as the species to which they belong. "Of particular things," says Aristotle, "there is neither definition nor demonstration, and,

* *Traité de la Formation mécanique des Langues.*

consequently, no science, since all definition is, in its nature, universal."

When once the imperative requirements of social communication were supplied, exactness, refinement, and intellectual gratification were aimed at. Languages, in advancing to perfection, naturally tend to satisfy the mind and follow the rapidity of thought. The adoption of *Pronouns* was one of the results of this double tendency: by avoiding the vagueness of nouns and disagreeable repetitions, they give precision and vivacity to discourse. Pronouns are probably contractions of nouns, determinative terms used elliptically, or abbreviated forms of phrases, serving to designate individuals. Thus the words and phraseology significant of the most familiar ideas, from their every-day and universal use, and from the tendency to rapid speaking just adverted to, undergo successive contractions; like pebbles on the beach, they are worn away until they lose every corner and mark which would indicate their original form.

In proportion as man's vocabulary increased, so must have increased the desire of extending his investigations and the power of forming chains of ideas. Things which, at first, had been considered separately, were viewed in their various relations. Hence originated *Prepositions*, which expressed, properly, the relative local aspects of things as they presented themselves to the senses, and, analogically, the relations of the abstract conceptions of the mind. Prepositions must have been introduced at an advanced state of language; for the ideas of relation which they represent demand great powers of abstraction and generalisation.

A further step in the psychological progress of man led him to discriminate between the various circumstances of time, place, quantity, and manner, which modified the actions, states, or attributes that were the subject of his thoughts. These circumstances, being themselves the particular relations which actions, states, or attributes bear to time, place, quantity, or manner, were, at first, expressed by phrases composed of words already existing—substantives and prepositions;—but their frequent recurrence, and man's tendency to shorten discourse, that it may keep pace with the ideas, naturally caused these phrases to be gradually compressed into single words, which have been named *Adverbs*.

The words which there is every reason to suppose were the last to appear in primitive languages, were *Conjunctions;* for

all the other parts of speech must have long served for the expression of simple ideas, and phraseology must have assumed a certain regularity of form before the need was felt of words by which to express the connection of judgments, the relation and dependence between propositions. There can be no close reasoning, no logical unity of speech without conjunctions: we must not then wonder that the Chinese, who have advanced so little in science, are as yet very deficient in this important sign.

That there existed, for any length of time, only primary words, or that there elapsed a long interval before the different kinds were all instituted, is more than we pretend to affirm; all we venture to say is, that they probably made their appearance in the order just mentioned. In the instinctive acts of infants can be traced the processes of intellect in the infancy of nations; the child, in acquiring his vernacular tongue, follows exactly the same order as that which must have taken place in the gradual adoption of the spoken elements; substantives, adjectives, and verbs, are the first words of his vocabulary. The deaf and dumb, circumstanced also, in reference to language, nearly as men in primitive societies, are remarkable for neglecting in their first written compositions, articles, pronouns, and conjunctions. Nature is universal and immutable in her laws; she guides individuals from infancy to manhood, as she does nations from barbarism to civilisation.

SECT. III.—DIVISION OF THE PARTS OF SPEECH INTO TWO CLASSES.

The above rapid sketch of the probable successive introduction of words in primitive languages, arising from the nature of their signification and the degree of importance of their different species, leads to the classification most consistent with the practical acquisition of a language.

The classification of words must assimilate in all languages and dialects; because the differences which exist between the signs, and on which that classification rests, are analogous to those which exist between the ideas they represent; and these are everywhere of the same nature, owing to the invariable laws of the human mind to which they are subjected. However, the words of one language do not correspond, each to each, with those of another; and the identity of nature in those which do

correspond is not always obvious; for the scantiness of language, compared with the infinite number of ideas to be expressed, constantly obliges men to use one part of speech for another, and to attach different ideas to the same words. This poverty has had on the representation of thought, as already noticed, the same effect as the scarcity of alphabetical characters had on the representation of sounds, sometimes the same word is used to express various ideas, and sometimes different words are combined to represent one idea. The diversity of circumstances in which these irregularities take place in different idioms, is one of the chief causes of dissimilarity between them.

To classify the words in a uniform and corresponding manner in all idioms, their import should be considered exclusively of ellipsis or derivation; and each should be distributed into as many different classes as it admits of different applications; for the nature and grammatical character of words depend on their particular import or the office which they fill in discourse and not on their external form, although particular languages may, in a few cases, appropriate certain forms to certain classes of words. "Parts of speech," says Sir John Stoddart, "are distinguished essentially by their use alone; any other distinction which they may happen to have, are accidents which vary in different languages and at different times and places, without altering their grammatical character."* When ellipses are taken into account in classifying words, great uncertainty must prevail, as it is often difficult to follow the changes and contractions which expressions have undergone in the course of time. Nor is derivation a sure criterion by which the classes of words can be ascertained, because they are not always applied the same way in their derivative as in their primitive form; many words, which in two languages have one common origin, or are derived one from the other, perform functions altogether different, and awake in the mind completely distinct ideas. Moreover, the opinion of the learned being frequently at variance on elliptical and etymological points, there must necessarily be great confusion in a classification which would rest on such questionable ground; whereas, that which is founded on the similarity of function between words, simplifies the elementary principles of comparative grammar, and facilitates the acquisition of a language.

The first three species of words, *Substantives*, *Adjectives*, and

* *Philosophy of Language; Universal Grammar.*

Verbs, constitute what we shall call the First Class of words. They are significant of themselves, and convey to the mind distinct ideas. They are the principle elements of discourse.

There can be in nature but two objects of thought,—*substances* and their *attributes*, that is, their modes of existence or of action; all judgments refer to the relations between these two objects. The substance, or subject, is expressed by a substantive; the attribute, or predicate, by an adjective; and the relation of coexistence, or the act of judging that one exists in the other, by a verb. The subject, the predicate, and the relation of coexistence, are the essential elements of a proposition; the substantive, adjective, and verb, by which they are expressed, are the corresponding elements of a sentence. The former is a logical; the latter, a grammatical designation.

The Second Class of words is composed of the other parts of speech,—the accessories in the expression of thought,—namely, *Articles*, *Pronouns*, *Prepositions*, *Adverbs*, and *Conjunctions*; to which may be added *Expletives*, serving, in a few languages, to characterise some of the other words, such as, in English, *to* and *shall*, which are signs, one of the present of the infinitive, and the other of the future. These expletives being of a different nature from the other parts of speech, ought to have a place in grammatical classification. The words of the second class do not of themselves represent any distinct ideas; they are significant only by relation; they serve to connect, modify, and complete the sense presented by the principal words.

The words of the first class are indispensable for the expression of thought, whereas those of the second class are only useful; they are not absolutely necessary; some of them have been dispensed with in highly refined languages, as will subsequently be seen. Pronouns and adverbs are only convenient terms supplying the place of other words of which they are contracted forms.

Unity and simplicity being the essence of all elements, none but single words, simple or compound, are entitled to be classed among the above-mentioned elements of discourse. Complex forms, consisting of separate words, which, from the unavoidable poverty of language, frequently supply the place of single terms, should be considered as phrases, not as pure parts of speech. All languages abound in such expressions, which, whether composed of two or more words, may be denominated *substantival phrases*, *adjectival phrases*, *verbal phrases*, *pronominal phrases*,

prepositional phrases, &c., as they stand for *substantives*, *adjectives*, *verbs*, &c. Hence the words of one language which have not an equivalent in another, can always be rendered by phrases. The single words of a language can be enumerated; but its compound forms, to whatever class they belong, are beyond computation; they are multiplied indefinitely to suit the endless modifications and combinations of ideas.

We do not include *interjections* among the parts of speech, because these may be considered rather as vague sounds than as distinct definite words; they are naturally indicative, not conventionally representative, of emotions. They have not the fixity of real words; for they vary in intonation and quantity with every emotion which gives them birth. They follow not the laws of language, but those of nature; they are, like the other signs of the language of action, common to all languages and intelligible to all men; and, yet, they are so indefinite in their form, that every individual is at liberty to use his own exclamatory expressions. "Interjections are not so properly parts of speech as adventitious sounds, certain voices of nature rather than voices of art."* "They cannot justly be called parts of speech; for they are never wanted in the construction of sentences."† "The brutish inarticulate interjection, which has nothing to do with speech and is only the miserable refuge of the speechless, has been permitted to usurp a place among words. . . . . The neighing of a horse, the lowing of a cow, the barking of a dog, the purring of a cat, sneezing, coughing, groaning, shrieking, and any other involuntary convulsion with oral sound, have almost as good a title to be called parts of speech as interjections have."‡ These opinions apply to interjections properly so called, not to exclamatory words, such as *courage*, *behold*, *hark*, *what*, *encore*, *away*, which, although ranked among interjections, belong to some of the classes above-mentioned.

A great objection to our introducing interjections in the present classification is, that, being in themselves complete propositions,—the instinctive indications of emotions and feelings,—they are neither elements of phraseology nor conventional signs; and it must not be forgotten that, in classifying words, we have for our principal object to facilitate the study of phraseology as found in conventional languages. At the same time, it must be

* J. Harris, *Hermes*. † W. Cobbett, *Le Maître d'Anglais*.
‡ Horne Tooke, *Diversions of Purley*.

admitted that interjections give force, truth, and life to expression, and contribute much towards rendering language an exact picture of the human mind.

SECT. IV.—FIRST CLASS OF WORDS.

1. *Substantives.*

A comparative glance at a few languages will now elicit the general principles which characterise the elements of discourse, and exhibit the points of resemblance and difference that mark the grammatical constitution of these languages.

The substantive, or noun, is the first term of the proposition, the representative of the subject respecting which judgment is expressed. Being the fundamental word of discourse, it imposes on all the others, as its subordinates, their form and place. Its function is to represent the idea of substance, by which word, substance, is grammatically meant any subject of thought—material or immaterial, an object, or a quality abstractedly considered. As the substance implies the collective elements or essential properties which constitute it, so the substantive expresses a collection of the simple perceptions and conceptions of those elements or properties. The word *gold*, for example, comprises in its signification all the simple notions of colour, weight, brilliancy, compactness, fusibility, malleability, ductility, incorruptibility, &c., which constitute and characterise this precious metal. The idea conveyed by a substantive will be the more clear and correct as it suggests to the mind a greater number of the properties which form the essence of the thing signified. Hence it is that the knowledge of words is commensurate with the knowledge of things.

The collection of ideas comprised within the signification of a substantive constitutes its *comprehension;* this comprehension is the greater as a larger number of simple ideas contribute to the general idea represented by the substantive. The number of individuals to which a substantive applies forms its *extension;* this extension is the greater as its signification embraces a greater number of individuals. The comprehension and the extension of substantives expressive of genera, species, and individuals, stand always in inverse ratio to each other; for the number of individuals is the smaller as a greater number of attributes constitutes their signification. In the words, *being, animal, quadruped,*

horse, *war-horse*, *Bucephalus*, the comprehension progressively increases and the extension diminishes.

When the comprehension of a substantive is the greatest and its extension the smallest, that is, when it recalls all the attributes which characterise one individual, it is called *proper*. When the substantive recalls the attributes which are common to all the individuals of a species, it is called *common* or *appellative*. Hence, the substantive common represents a class, and the substantive proper an individual: the former is a general, the latter a particular term.

Substantives which designate collections of individuals of the same kind are called *collective*. This class of substantives, which we introduce here in conformity with general practice, is very indefinite and unsatisfactory; for the denomination of *collective* is withheld from a great number of substantives which are as much entitled to it as those to which it is usually given, such as *library*, which implies a collection of books; *book*, a collection of leaves; *page*, a collection of lines; *railing*, a collection of rails; *chain*, a collection of links, and many others of this kind. The English language, in common with Latin, falls into a grammatical inconsistency respecting these words; it occasionally requires collective substantives, although themselves in the singular, to govern verbs in the plural. This irregularity is a source of great perplexity both to foreigners and to the English themselves.

The common substantives which express objects existing in virtue of the properties that constitute them, are *concrete* terms, and the names which have, by analogy, been given to the qualities, modes of being or of acting of these objects, considered abstractedly from them, are *abstract* terms. Concrete substantives express therefore ideas of real beings, and abstract substantives ideas of things which have no material and independent existence.

Substantives may be modified in four ways,—in number, gender, case, and degree.

The numbers, *singular* and *plural*, distinguish substantives as signifying one or more than one individual of the same species, one or more than one species of the same genus; they consequently affect their extension, not their comprehension. This distinction is found in all languages, it being universally required to distribute the genus into its species, and the species into its individuals. Proper substantives, when strictly used as such, denoting single individuals, do not admit of a plural.

In Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, and other idioms, there is a particular form, called the *dual*, which serves to indicate two individuals. Languages also exist in which particular forms of the plural indicate a large, and others, a small number.

The languages in which vocal sounds prevail have generally the plural marked, in speaking, by a change of the final sound of the word, whilst those in which articulations predominate denote it by the addition of one of these elements. This remark applies equally to the inflections which indicate the genders and cases of substantives, the comparative and superlative of adjectives, and the moods, tenses, and persons of verbs. In some languages, however, as in Chinese, the plural number is expressed by expletives which are added to substantives, or by repeating the substantives themselves. Many nouns in English, as *dozen*, *pair*, *sheep*, *salmon*, *snipe*, *head* of cattle, &c., have no plural, although the ideas which they signify are susceptible of number.

In all languages substantives are liable to considerable irregularity, both in the formation of their plural and in the use of either number. But the irregularity which especially demands the attention of those who learn foreign languages is the difference in the numbers of corresponding substantives in various languages; for example, *measles* and the German *Masern* are always plural, the corresponding French, *rougeole*, is always singular; *darkness* is always singular, and the French for it, *ténèbres*, always plural. There is a large number of such contrasts in any two languages.

Distinction of sex has been marked in language by genders—the *masculine* and *feminine*,—which indicate respectively the names of males and females. This is effected sometimes by distinct substantives, sometimes by auxiliary words signifying *male* and *female*, sometimes also by particular terminations.

The masculine and feminine genders have, by analogy, been applied to the names of inanimate things, according as the nouns expressive of them were formed of grave or acute, harsh or agreeable sounds, sometimes also as the thing named bore supposed affinity to the male or the female kind. A third gender, *the neuter* (which word implies that the noun is neither masculine nor feminine), has been, in many languages, attached to the names of inanimate things and of animals which are considered abstractedly of sex. Whenever the genders denote the sex or absence of sex, they increase the comprehension and diminish

the extension of substantives. As genders arise from various causes in different languages, they vary in their application to particular substantives in each, and often present strange anomalies. Thus, in English, *man-of-war* is feminine; the German *Weib* (married woman) and *das Mädchen* (the girl) are neuter; the French *gens* (people) varies its gender according as an adjective precedes or follows it, as *ce sont de charmantes gens*, or *des gens charmants* (they are charming people.)

The Hebrew, Arabic, Irish, French, and Italian languages have only the masculine and feminine. Greek, Latin, German, Dutch, Swedish, Polish, and Russian, admit of the three genders; but they apply the masculine and feminine, as well as the neuter, to the names of inanimate things and irrational animals. In Spanish the neuter characterises the adjectives used substantively.

English is, on this point, the most consistent of all languages: it admits of masculine and feminine for nouns, denoting males and females of the human kind, and of a few of the most common species of the brute creation, and has no gender for other nouns; specific words being, for the greater part, joined to the names of the lower animals, to mark their sex when the distinction is required. A conventional sex is sometimes, it is true, attributed to certain animals and inanimate things; but this distinction is rhetorical, not grammatical. The two English neuter pronouns *it* and *which*, are used exclusively for inanimate things and animals. This grammatical principle possesses a double advantage; it facilitates the acquisition of the language to foreigners, and it affords the means of elevating the style by personification; for, when this figurative form is resorted to only occasionally, it is more striking and pleasing than when it is an habitual form of expression.

The French language is, in respect to genders, very perplexing to foreigners, because the masculine and feminine seem, in most instances, arbitrarily distributed among its nouns. In some languages the gender of nouns changes with their meaning; the French and German offer many examples of this fact, as *souris*, m. (smile), *souris*, f. (mouse); *band*, m. (volume), *band*, f. (ribbon). In others, as Greek, Latin, and Italian, some nouns change their genders in passing from the singular to the plural. Close attention to this attribute of substantives is the more imperative in inflected languages, as an ignorance of their gender brings several errors in its train, since articles, adjectives, pronouns, and participles take different inflections, according as the substantive to which they relate is either masculine, feminine, or neuter.

The nature of the relations which exist between ideas may be determined in language either by prepositions, by the respective places of the noun, or by their change of form. Sometimes these three ways combine in the expression of a relation.

The changes of form, which consist chiefly of inflections or variations in the termination of nouns, and which serve to express relations, are called *cases*. A case, therefore, expresses the coalescence of the relation and conception in one word: the nominative case which marks the subject of a proposition, and the accusative which marks the direct object, imply no relation that could be conveyed by prepositions; but the other cases, called *oblique*, are always equivalent to prepositions.

The number of cases varies considerably in different languages: the English, Dutch, and Persian have only two, the Arabic and Irish three, the German has four, the Greek five, the Latin six, the Russian seven, and the Sanskrit eight; the latter, however, according to Fred. Schlegel,* has so great a number of cases that it makes but little use of prepositions. Modern Greek has preserved all the cases of ancient Greek, with the exception of the dative. The more numerous the cases the more favourable to transpositive collocation is the language; whereas the absence of inflections confines its structure to one determinate order, because the relation of words can be marked only by juxtaposition.

The genitive case, also called possessive, is, of all the oblique cases, the most generally used: as it involves an idea of appurtenance attributed to a second substantive, the noun so inflected may be virtually considered as an adjective modifying and restricting the signification of this second substantive. Hence it is, that, in different idioms, as English, Persian, and Turkish, the genitive, like an adjective, is placed before the substantive to which it relates.

The collection of the various inflected forms assumed by a substantive in all its cases, is called *declension;* and the nouns which are susceptible of cases are said to be *declinable.* The word *variable* is a more general term: it applies to all the changes which words may undergo in their terminations.

French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swedish, and Danish are indeclinable. Relations are, in these languages, expressed by situation or by prepositions; they are marked in Hebrew and other languages of the Semitic family by prepositional syllables which are prefixed to the noun, and often make one

* *The Language and Philosophy of India.*

word with it. These changes might be called cases; but the denomination of case does not apply to nouns which vary neither their initial nor final syllables. "When there is no change of form," says Latham, "there is no case."* However, a contrary opinion was very prevalent at one time; the first modern grammars having been moulded on the Latin, a false analogy was established between its principles and those of modern idioms; and hence arose the improper application of declensions to their substantives, although these are indeclinable. Each language has a particular genius which cannot be transferred from one to another.

The import of substantives admits of degrees, which are called *augmentatives* and *diminutives*. These degrees consist in an idea of greatness or smallness, and of something pleasing, disagreeable, or contemptible, which is added to their comprehension and indicated by an affix, or some other modification of the original word. Dutch and Irish nouns may, for the most part, be changed into diminutives. In Greek, Latin, French, and English, this property of the substantive exists only in a few instances; but both augmentatives and diminutives are very common in Italian and Spanish, and more still in Arabic, in which all substantives and adjectives are liable to be so modified. All German nouns admit of diminutives. These degrees impart copiousness, force, and grace to these languages; but although never adequately represented, their absence is little felt, because the ideas conveyed by them can always be expressed by adjectives.

2. *Adjectives.*

Adjectives serve to distinguish substances by their peculiar qualities, properties, or other modes of existence. They do not, as usually defined, express quality or property: they only predicate it in the substance, that is, they indicate that the thing signified by the substantive to which they relate possesses such qualities. They have also been called *modificatives* and *qualificatives*, terms which are preferable to the denomination of *adjectives*, as they convey an idea of the nature of that part of speech, whereas the word *adjective*, signifying *added to*, may equally apply to adverbs, or to any word added to another.

Attributes have no separate existence apart from the substance

* *The English Language.*

to which they belong, so adjectives are inseparable from substantives. In the expression *white horse*, *white* does not signify the property itself, but it indicates that the horse posseses such a property; the absence of the substantive makes the adjective a nonentity. The abstract noun *whiteness* is properly the word which expresses the quality or property separately from the substance. When an adjective fills this office, it becomes an abstract noun, as *white* is cheerful.

The substantive, involving in its import all the ideas of properties which constitute the class of things signified, takes no adjectives but such as predicate properties forming no essential part of that class. They consequently serve as terms of comparison to distinguish, by accessory ideas, the individuals which substantives signify from other individuals of the same species. They affect both the comprehension and extension of substantives; for they increase the first by the addition of a new idea, and diminish the second by confining the signification of the substantive to a smaller range of individuals.

In many languages, and particularly in Sanskrit, Greek and Latin, adjectives have distinctive terminations; which, as Horne Tooke remarks, were originally separate words.* These terminations indicate a relation of abundance, privation, capacity, or any other, analogous to the affixes, *ful*, *less*, *like*, *ish*, *ous*, *able*, *ible*, *ive*, &c., which characterise many English adjectives.

The natural union which exists between the substance and its attributes, has produced the logical connection between the subject and the predicate, and has led to the adoption of means by which a corresponding connection is established between the substantive and the adjective. In German, Greek, Latin, and other inflected idioms, the connection is effected by the adjective being made to agree in gender, number, and case, with the substantive, that is to say, to assume different inflections which correspond to, and harmonise with, those of the substantive viewed in these three aspects; many Greek adjectives having three genders, three numbers, and five cases (of which, however, some are alike in the dual and plural), take about forty different forms.

Nouns in French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, not having cases, adjectives agree with them only in gender and number, and, besides, they are placed near them. In other languages, such as English, Swedish, and Turkish, adjectives have neither number, gender, nor case; and their relation to the substantive is marked

* See *Diversions of Purley*.

by their being placed before it. This peculiarity of construction, which obtains also in German and Persian, two languages to which English bears a striking affinity, enables substantives to be converted into adjectives by being so placed, as *screw-steam ship, heart-rending tale, ivy-mantled tower, porcelain chimney-piece ornament.* The facility of thus multiplying attributive terms indefinitely, imparts to these idioms great descriptive powers, and is most favourable to poetical and oratorical effect. Sir W. Jones remarks, that the modern Persian excels all other languages in this mode of forming compounded epithets. In general, the convertibility of words is commensurate with the absence of inflections or of orthographical form indicative of particular parts of speech. In the Chinese language, which consists of invariable roots, the same word stands for a substantive, an adjective, a verb, an adverb, a conjunction, or an expletive;—its office and import being known only by its place.

The French language, in common with those of the classical stock, supplies the absence of attributive terms by adjectival phrases composed of prepositions and substantives,—as *un arrangement à l'amiable* (an amicable arrangement), *une maison de briques* or *en briques* (a brick house). Deprived of the advantage of converting its substantives into adjectives, it is endowed with another equally great: its adjectives, although generally placed after the substantives, may occasionally precede them, being then used figuratively. This double sense of adjectives arising from their position, is a source of wealth and beauty to the language; but, at the same time, of difficulty to foreigners.

The qualities or properties which it is the purport of adjectives to predicate in substantives, are susceptible of different degrees of intensity; the excess or deficiency of the quality suggested by any particular adjective may also be considered absolutely or relatively to that of another. All languages possess modes of indicating these various degrees, to which have been given the names of *comparative, superlative relative,* and *superlative absolute.* These degrees of comparison may be expressed either by adverbs which are placed before the adjectives, as in French, or by a change in the termination, as in German, Latin, and Greek. It is this change in the form of adjectives which properly deserves the name of degrees of comparison. English admits of both ways for the comparative and the superlative relative; its superlative absolute is marked by the word *very.* In Italian and Spanish

the comparative and the superlative relative are indicated only by adverbs; but the superlative absolute is formed either by an adverb denoting *very*, or by a particular inflection of the adjective. Sometimes the comparative is expressed by a prefix to the adjective, and the superlative absolute by a repetition of the adjective, as in Hebrew. The latter form is also sometimes resorted to in Italian.

The degrees of comparison have different import, according as they are applied to relative or absolute properties. In the first instance, they show an excess in one property over another, or over several, without reference to a positive or definite standard; —thus, if we say *one line is longer than another*, or *is the longest*, we do not, thereby, imply that either of them is long, or approaching to any particular length,—this property being relative. In the second instance, when absolute properties are compared, the degrees of comparison mark not so much an increase of property, as an approach to the definite property expressed by the adjective in the positive state: by saying *one line is straighter than another*, or *is the straightest*, we mean that it approaches nearer, or the nearest to *straightness*.

3. *Verbs.*

The chief office of the verb is to denote a relation of co-existence between the substance and its attributes. It may express this relation exclusively, or comprise simultaneously with it in its signification the attribute, whether a mode of existence or of action, a property, or quality.

The verb *to be*, which denotes the simple existence of the attribute in the subject, has been considered by many grammarians as the only real verb; it is, indeed, sufficient, in combination with adjectives, to express all judgments; and yet, this verb is unknown to several American tribes. The relation which it expresses is the most important of all, and the one most required, because it is the essence of a judgment, the ultimate object to which all the acts of the intellect tend.

The verbs which include the attributes in their signification, are concrete terms, and have been called *attributive*, in contradistinction to *substantive*, a denomination given to the abstract verb *to be*. The attributive verb, like the adjective, which is also an attributive term, qualifies the subject; but it qualifies it with the additional ideas of affirmation, time, number, person, and

sometimes even gender. It is this multiple office which makes it the most complex and the most useful of all words.

When the attributive verb denotes an action performed by the subject, it is called *active*; when it denotes an action suffered by the subject, it is called *passive*; and when it denotes neither, but signifies a mode of existence, it is called *neuter*.

The action expressed by an active verb, may relate to an extraneous subject towards which it is directed, and which completes the idea; the word denoting this complement of the action is called *object*. The action may be absolute, that is, may remain with its agent; it is then complete in itself, and does not require an object. Hence two sorts of active verbs, the *transitive* and the *intransitive*.

The transitive verb may be connected with its object directly, or by means of a preposition; the first is called *transitive-direct* the second *transitive-indirect*; and their respective objects are equally called *direct* and *indirect*. The direct object, in our modern idioms, corresponds to the Latin and Greek accusatives, and the indirect to an oblique case, including the preposition in its composition.

The transitive-indirect verb may also, conjointly with the preposition as its adjunct, be denominated a compound transitive-direct verb: thus, in the expression, *look for him*, it is indifferent whether *look* be called a transitive-indirect verb, and *for him*, its indirect object, or *look for*, a compound transitive-direct, and *him*, its direct object. If the preposition which is annexed to an intransitive verb has no complement, it is used adverbially, and the verb becomes conjointly with it, as with any adverb modifying it, compound intransitive: so, *to pass on, to come in*, are intransitive verbal phrases, as well as *to fall out, to go down*.

Active transitive verbs are also, in English, frequently followed by prepositions having sometimes an object and sometimes none; in the first case, the transitive verb becomes intransitive, and forms with the preposition a compound active, as *to get over a difficulty, to call on a person*; in the second case, the active verb preserves its transitive nature, and the preposition is used adverbially, as *take it over, lead him on*. The theory of prepositional and adverbial adjuncts is, in English, extremely intricate, and one of the greatest difficulties encountered by foreigners, when learning that language.

The same verb may be transitive-direct with regard to one

thing, and transitive-indirect with regard to another; it has then two objects, one direct and another indirect, as *I offer it to him.*

This classification is founded on the nature of the verb; but, in the present imperfect state of grammar, it is not generally so understood: the term *active* is commonly applied to a transitive-direct verb only, and the term *neuter* is indiscriminately used for *transitive-indirect* and *intransitive* verbs, as well as for verbs expressing modes of existence. In conformity with common usage, we will employ the terms *active* and *neuter* with these acceptations.

The greater number of transitive verbs may be used intransitively; and it frequently happens that a verb is transitive in one language, and intransitive in another, or transitive-direct in the one, and transitive-indirect in the other, according as the idea expressed by it was originally considered absolutely or relatively; *to come* is intransitive in English, the Arabic for it is transitive; *to salute* is transitive, the corresponding Arabic verb is intransitive; *to enjoy* is transitive-direct, the French *jouir* is transitive-indirect; *to listen*, is transitive-indirect, *écouter* is transitive-direct; *to love God* is rendered in Spanish by *amar à Dios.*

When two objects are attached to a transitive verb, not only are these often differently placed in different languages, but sometimes also the object which is direct in the one, happens to be indirect in the other, as *I lost sight of that—j'ai perdu cela de vue.*

When the subject of a transitive verb, whether direct or indirect, is also its complement or object, that verb is called *reflective.* The active verb denotes an action done, the passive an action received, and the reflective an action done and received. The reflective verb is the opposite of the neuter; for it is both active and passive, whereas the latter is neither the one nor the other. Yet, such is, in practice, the deviation from general principles of grammar, that these two opposite forms are frequently equivalent to each other in different languages: many neuter verbs in English, for example, are rendered by reflective verbs in French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese.

Reflective verbs sometimes assume a particular form, as, in Greek, those of the middle voice, which are truly reflective: but, in nearly all the modern European idioms, they follow the form of the active with the addition of a personal pronoun object of the same person as the subject. Some languages have no reflective verbs; the Arabs, among other ways of supplying their place, say, for example, *I cut my soul*, for I cut myself. In French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, the reflective form is often used

by analogy, even when the action expressed by the verb is not reflected back on the subject, as *je me battrai avec vous, I will fight you; ces choses se voient tous les jours, these things are seen every day.*

The passive verb is, in some languages, a distinct word altogether, and is formed from the active by a change either in the termination, as the Latin *amo* (I love), *amor* (I am loved), or in the body of the word, as the Turkish *sevmek* (to love), *sevilmek* (to be loved). In the greater number of modern European languages there is no passive verb; its place is supplied by a periphrasis consisting of the verb *to be*, and the participle past expressive of the action suffered by the subject. Transitive-direct verbs alone can assume the passive form; and, *vice versâ*, the latter may always be changed into the active.

The English language, however, presents exceptions to this rule: a proneness to use the passive, the reason of which may be found in the national character of the people, leads them to the frequent use of the transitive-indirect as passive; thus, *you are spoken to.* It is obvious that, in this case, the words *spoken to* should be considered as the participle past of the compound transitive-direct or active verb *to speak to.* The English compound neuter verbs, which are formed, as already stated, by the adjunction of an adverb, as *to look up, to run away*, cannot, as such, be changed into the passive; but, if further compounded with a preposition, they assume the office of active verbs, and can be used in the passive voice, as *they look up to him, he is looked up to by them.*

The power of substituting the active for the passive form, and *vice versâ*, affords the means of drawing the attention more forcibly on the subject or the object, as may be desirable. Although the active and the passive form can generally be substituted one for the other, they are not indiscriminately used by some nations. The English, as we have just remarked, are inclined to prefer the passive; the French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and German, the active and reflective.

A verb, whether active or neuter, is said to be *impersonal* when the action or state which it expresses is conceived abstractedly of an agent, a pronoun of the third person singular being, in some languages, used for a subject, but without reference to any conception, and merely to keep up the general analogy with other verbs. Impersonal verbs can have no first or second person, as these would imply the idea of an agent.

Consciousness, doubt, supposition, desire, will, which are different states of the mind in the conception of thought and the expression of judgments, demand corresponding forms in the verbs by which such states of mind may be manifested in the communication of ideas. These forms, called *moods*, are distinguished by particular inflections, or by auxiliary words, according as the language is more or less inflected. They mark the different modes of assertion; in other words, the relations in which the various propositions of discourse stand to each other, whether they are affirmative or conditional, deliberative or suppositive, imperative or optative, principal or subordinate.

The number of moods varies in different languages: the Basque verbs have eleven, the Hebrew and Arabic only two, the imperative and the indicative; some idioms have none. But the moods most generally found in languages, are *the indicative, the potential or conditional, the imperative, the subjunctive*, and *the infinitive*.

The indicative expresses categorical affirmation; and the conditional, hypothetical affirmation: both these moods admit of the interrogative form, of which property the other moods are destitute. The imperative is used for entreating as well as for commanding: its name, indicating only one of its functions, is consequently defective. As this mood implies futurity in the action expressed, a future tense is often used in its place: *steal not*, and *thou shalt not steal*, have the same signification.

When a fact is asserted not as actual, but merely as possible or contingent, it is expressed by the subjunctive mood, also called conjunctive, because the contingent assertion is usually marked by a conjunction. This mood, as indicated by its more usual name, is confined to the expression of subordinate or subjoined propositions; it implies the existence of a primary proposition either expressed or understood, on which it depends. The principles which govern its use, vary considerably in different languages, and are often very perplexing to foreigners. This is particularly the case in French, in which it would be difficult, not to say impossible, to give clear and definite rules which may, with certainty, indicate its use in every circumstance. It rarely happens, that French and English subjunctives are rendered one by the other in expressing the same ideas.

In the expression *that I may do*, the two words *may do*, constitute the present of the subjunctive, of which mood the expletive *may* is the sign; but, in *I may do* and *may I do*, *do* is in the

infinitive, and the defective verb *may* is in the present of the indicative, corresponding to the Latin *possum*, or the French *je puis*. This distinction, which applies equally to the word *might*, is of the utmost importance in rendering these and similar expressions into other languages. English grammarians have, for the most part, neglected to notice the double office of the words *may*, *might*, *will*, *would*, *shall*, and *should*, and have thereby introduced much confusion into this part of the language; but the confusion is still greater as regards the defective verb *can*, *could*; they call these words signs of the potential, although they are invariably used, not as auxiliaries, but as elements of a distinct neuter verb, corresponding to the Latin *possum* and the French *pouvoir*, and standing for the verbal phrase *to be able*. We may, in passing, notice this singular fact, that the English language has not a verb to denote the state of capability in all its modifications of moods and tenses; *can* and *could*, *may* and *might*, being, from their defectiveness, inadequate to effect this object, recourse must be had to their respective equivalent verbal phrases, *to be able*, and *to have it in one's power*.

The infinitive, different from the other moods, affirms the existence of an attribute abstractedly, of a particular subject and divested of number. In modern Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic, verbs have no present of the infinitive mood; its place is, in the latter two idioms, supplied by a substantive. The present of the infinitive is, in most languages, used as an abstract noun,—a grammatical principle which is general in Italian, Spanish, and German, but much restricted in French and in English.

The participle denotes time and attribute divested of affirmation; it implies the existence of a subject, but without designation of persons. These peculiarities of import have rendered its classification difficult: some grammarians consider it as a subdivision of the infinitive, and others as a separate mood; not a few call it a distinct part of speech. Combining in its signification the ideas of time and attribute, it partakes equally of the nature of verbs and adjectives. The Greek and Latin languages admit of past, present, and future participles; modern idioms have, for the greater part, only the present and past. The participle is, in inflected languages, variable or invariable, according as it performs the office of adjective or verb. The principles which govern its variations in French, and particularly those of the participle past, are very perplexing even to the natives of France.

The participle present varies considerably in its application in different languages; it is used in Greek, English, and German, both as an adjective and as an abstract noun; in Latin and French it may be converted into an adjective only, and in Italian and Spanish it is altogether inconvertible. The present of the infinitive and the participle present may become the subjects or objects of a verb, according as the language admits of either part of the verb being converted into a noun. In the classical ancient languages the participle has given rise to certain forms called gerund and supine, which admit of cases and which may be considered as verbal substantives. This convertibility of the verb into a substantive is attended with great advantage to a language; it gives it flexibility and copiousness, and affords considerable facility for following the generation and logical association of ideas.

It may be observed that the moods of verbs perform an office analogous to that of the cases of substantives. Cases indicate the relations which substantives bear to each other in a proposition; so moods determine the relations existing between the different propositions of a complex sentence. As cases are often governed and their places supplied by prepositions in the languages which do not admit of cases, so moods are governed and their places often supplied by conjunctions. This government of conjunctions varies in different languages.

All the judgments which we form relate either to the past, present, or future. This triple circumstance of time has given rise to the tenses of verbs, which, like the moods, are either distinguished by particular inflections in their final syllables, as in the languages of the classical group, or by means of auxiliary verbs, and expletives. In English, German, Dutch, and Swedish, both modes of distinction have been adopted.

The different degrees of proximity to the present time, or remoteness from it, and the definiteness or vagueness of the epoch alluded to, as well as the relative periods at which various actions may be performed, have introduced among nations great diversity in the import and number of tenses. If compound forms are considered as tenses of verbs, the English may be said to have forty-six tenses, and the French only twenty; but if compound forms are excluded, English verbs have then two tenses only and the French eight. This is the number recognised by Lemare* in French verbs, whereas Beauzée† gives them

* *Cours de Langue Française.* † *Grammaire Générale.*

sixty-two, by introducing periphrases which denote various circumstances of time.

The number of tenses varies considerably in different languages, and those which seem to correspond are not always used in similar circumstances. The preterite and compound of the present tense of the indicative in French and in English, for example, are frequently opposed in practice in these two languages, the French using the preterite when the English use the compound of the present, and *vice versâ*. The particular shades of difference which characterise various tenses of verbs in some languages frequently render their application in discourse extremely perplexing not only to foreigners, but sometimes even to the natives themselves. Among many other examples of this fact, we may mention the difficulty of knowing when to use in English, *shall* or *will*, and in French *the preterite, or the compound of the present tense of the indicative mood.*

In Hebrew and other Semitic languages, there is no simple present tense. This is truly philosophical, because time being transient and continuous, no appreciable portion of it can be present; a part must necessarily be gone as another is coming. The present *instant*, like the geometrical *point*, has no real existence. The place of the present is, in those languages, occasionally supplied by the future and by periphrastic forms.

However limited some languages may be in the system of their tenses, the deficiency is more apparent than real, because all circumstances of time for which one language has tenses can be rendered into one which has them not, by means of adverbs of time, or by combinations of words constituting verbal phrases, thus, *I am writing*, is rendered into French by *je suis à écrire*, or *je suis en train d'écrire; J'écrivais des thèmes* is expressed in English by *I was writing* or *I used to write exercises.*

To establish more closely the relation between subject and verb, we find that, in the majority of languages, the verb is made to undergo changes corresponding to the number of the subject. The languages which have a dual in their nouns assume also particular forms to express this number of their verbs.

The person who speaks, the one spoken to, and the one spoken of, are also known by particular final syllables, which, in primitive languages, can be easily resolved into the addition of the pronouns to the simple elementary form of the verb

with which it has coalesced. Bopp has placed this beyond doubt in the case of Sanskrit and other languages of the Indo-European branch.* Dr. Pritchard has also most satisfactorily proved that the personal terminations of Welsh verbs are pronouns.† Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Irish verbs admit of inflections sufficiently distinct to preclude the necessity of using personal pronouns subject, so that they are by themselves, the collective expressions of a judgment in its three essential elements,—the subject, predicate, and relation of co-existence with the additional ideas of affirmation, time, number, and person ; thus, in Latin, *studeo* (I study), and, in Italian, *parlerà* (he will speak), constitute complete propositions. In other idioms, as English, French, and German, pronouns are indispensable accompaniments to the verbs, except sometimes in the imperative, as, *speak*, which is equally a perfect proposition ; for it implies an agent and an act, whilst it couples the idea of the act of speaking with the idea of a person addressed.

Hebrew, Swedish, and Russian verbs carry the principle of concord so far as to admit of genders in such a manner that it can be known by the terminations whether the subject is masculine or feminine. In most modern languages this principle is sacrificed to a form of politeness, which consists in using the plural of the second person for the singular. In French, and more particularly in Italian, it is both courteous and elegant to address strangers in the third person ; in Spanish, Portuguese, and Swedish this form is very generally employed. But the German language surpasses all the others in forms of politeness ; for, besides these anomalies, which it has in common with them, it expresses a still higher degree of courtesy, by the use of the verb in the third person plural with a subject in the singular. In Greek, a plural neuter noun often governs the verb in the singular ; and, in English, as already noticed, a singular collective noun sometimes governs it in the plural.

The collection of the different moods, tenses, persons, numbers, and genders, which constitute a verb, is called *conjugation*. To state in succession all these different parts, is to *conjugate*. The verbs which follow some general principles of analogy, are said to be regular : those which deviate from these general forms, are called irregular. The expediency of this subdivision into regular

* *Comparat. Gram. of the Sanskrit, Zend, Greek*, &c.
† *The Eastern Origin of the Celtic Nations*, &c.

and irregular verbs, is a mere matter of opinion among grammarians. Some, for example, make thirteen, and others only two conjugations in Greek; more uncertainty still attends this classification in French. But, under whatever head the conjugations be classed, the study of the various changes which the verbs undergo to express all the views of the mind, is what should principally engage the attention of learners. The English, German, Dutch, and their cognate, have only one form of conjugation.

The Chinese and the monosyllabic languages of the same family have, in their verbs, neither moods, tenses, numbers, nor persons; as they have no cases in their nouns, nor changes of any kind in the form of their words: every modification of idea is marked by expletives, that is, auxiliaries, which supply the place of inflections; the import of words is determined by the place they occupy relatively to each other. Their construction depends entirely on the principle of juxta-position. These oral languages, as barren of words as Chinese writing is exuberant of symbols, present, in the great simplicity of their structure, a phenomenon of peculiar character, and well deserving the investigation of philologists, as they form a singular contrast with other ancient idioms.

The various inflections which, in substantives, adjectives, and verbs, serve to denote relations, are of the highest antiquity: they abound in the oldest languages and have been also adopted in some of the modern. It is probable that the inflections of the variable words in ancient languages, were originally monosyllabic significant adjuncts, similar to those of the Chinese, which, in the course of time, have coalesced with the words which they modified. The similarity between inflections of words in different languages, has greatly aided modern philologists in marking the affinities which connect the various dialects belonging to the great family called Indo-European.

However, the universal tendency to generalise the principles of language and to simplify the expression of thought, gradually introduced into our derived idioms special terms for particular ideas; and led, in some of them, to the neglect of inflections in their substantives, adjectives, and verbs. Thus the different terminations of the verb, which amount to more than five hundred in ancient Greek, are reduced to about fifty in modern Greek, and their number, which is nearly one hundred and fifty in Latin, is only forty-nine in French, and so few as six in English, except in

the verb *to be*, which admits of ten variations. Derived languages are, in almost every case, less complex, less involved, and more philosophical in their grammatical structure, than those from which they have sprung. But, as the absence of inflections renders languages more simple in their grammatical concord and in their syntax, it complicates their composition, and makes them less concise and graceful. In the following sentence,—"*Vincere scis, Hannibal; victoriâ uti nescis,*" (you know how to conquer, Hannibal; you know not how to profit by the victory),—how heavy, how prolix is the English, compared with the Latin. It is chiefly the brevity, force, and vivacity of this classic idiom, which has rendered its use so general in inscriptions.

The inflections of declensions and conjugations, such as they exist in Greek and Latin, impart to language not only great condensation of meaning, but a power of transposition which admirably favours harmony of sounds, varied conception of thoughts, all the workings of imagination and taste, all the requirements of eloquence and poetry; whereas prepositions, pronouns, and auxiliary verbs, which, in modern idioms, stand as their substitutes, by tying down the words to a fixed and monotonous order, clog imagination, enervate sentiment, and deprive expression of the force, eloquence, and variety, which characterise ancient languages. The long and curiously involved sentences which result from the peculiar structure of the ancient idioms, and which baffle all attempt at literal translation, requiring as they do from the learner, great effort of mind to investigate the mutual relation of their subordinate parts and perceive all their bearings, must, indeed, be pre-eminently calculated to invigorate the intellectual faculties.

SECT. V.—SECOND CLASS OF WORDS.

1. *Articles.*

Articles serve chiefly to limit the signification of common substantives from general to particular sense; but this determinative function is not always strictly observed as regards the definite article, which, especially in French and the kindred languages, may come before substantives, whether these are taken in a generic, specific, or individual sense.

Proper substantives, denoting individuals in a determinate manner, require, in general, no article. Greek and Italian are

among the languages which present some exceptions to this rule. Names of countries, rivers, and mountains, in Greek, French, Italian, and Spanish, take the definite article, which, however, is sometimes dispensed with before the names of countries, as, *nous arrivons de France*, (we have just come from France).

Such is the caprice of custom, that, although the article should, from its nature, be exclusively joined to substantives, nevertheless, we often find it repeated before adjectives in Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic. The absence of the article in English, by which is consistently indicated the greatest extension of the substantive, that is, its general sense, or signification of a class, is an advantage which this language possesses over many others.

Articles are considered by some grammarians as adjectives; because, like this species of words, they are joined to substantives, of whose signification they usually restrict the extension. This confusion, arising from a false denomination, would not probably have been made, had adjectives been more properly called *modificatives* or *qualificatives*, as suggested by some writers; because articles, denoting no mode of existence or action, no quality or property, consequently, not modifying or qualifying the signification of the substantives to which they are joined, cannot obviously be classed under this head. The nature of articles is altogether distinct from that of adjectives: for they do not increase the comprehension of substantives; they can never, like adjectives, form the third term of a proposition; two of them cannot come together, as adjectives do; nor do they admit of degrees of comparison.

The English words *the* and *a*, and their equivalents in other languages, are usually considered as the only articles—a strange notion with grammarians, who have limited this class to two words, when there happen to be many which fill exactly a similar office. It is obvious that all words belong to the same class, which, coming before substantives, determine their extension without adding the idea of quality, property, or other mode of being. This is precisely the case with the words, *some*, *any*, *this*, *that*, *these*, *those*, *what*, *which*, *whatever*, *each*, *every*, *both*, *either*, *several*, *much*, *many*, *no*, and others, which are, consequently, entitled to the same denomination as *the* and *a*. Some of these words, it is true, may, by the suppression of the substantive, be used as pronouns; but, when joined to substantives and performing the same function as articles, they ought to be classed with the latter part of speech, and not with pronouns or adjectives.

They differ from adjectives in every particular as articles do. The nature of their office is so identically the same as that of articles, and so different from that of adjectives, that they cannot, like this species of words, be used simultaneously with articles; nor, with few exceptions, can any two of them come together.

Let it not be said that we should not change a long established classification: grammarians have not the privilege of infallibility. Every department of science has, in the course of time, been modified and improved. Planets, minerals, natural elements are now admitted to be more numerous than our ancestors believed them to be, why may not the number of articles be increased, if required by the progress of grammatical science? Harris, Beauzée, Sicard, and other eminent grammarians, have placed these words in one and the same class. Latham, who calls *no* an article, is not far from being of the same opinion.

All the words which are grammatically circumstanced as articles, may, perhaps, with propriety, be classed together with them, under the denomination of *determinatives*, given to the articles by Abbé Sicard and others, which specifies more particularly the function they perform in common. This would obviate the objection raised against their being called either *articles* or *adjectives*.

The words *my, thy, his, her, its, our, your, their*, perform a double office: they are pronouns relatively to the name of the possessor of which they take the place; for they signify *of me, of thee*, &c; and they are determinatives in reference to the noun before which they are placed; they are, at the same time, determinatives and pronouns, differently from the other words above-mentioned, which are either one or the other, as the case may be. The idea of possession which they attach to the nouns before which they come, may entitle them to the appellation of *adjectives;* so that they may, with equal propriety, be called *pronominal adjectives*, or *pronominal determinatives*. The double function of these words is illustrated by the fact that, in English, *his, her, its*, like pronouns, take the gender of the substantive for which they stand; whereas their French equivalents, *mon, ma, mes, ton, ta, tes*, &c., like determinatives or adjectives, agree in gender and number with the substantive before which they are placed. The corresponding Latin words, *meus, mea, meum, tuus, tua, tuum*, &c., are either pronouns or adjectives, according as they signify *mine* or *my, thine* or *thy*, &c.

The numerals called *Cardinal numbers*, ought to be classed among the determinatives, not among the adjectives; for they do not possess the essence of the adjective; they express no mode of existence, no quality attributable to the thing signified by the substantive; they affect the extension, but not the comprehension of the substantives before which they are placed. The indefinite article is in many languages no other but the numeral *one* itself. When the *cardinal numbers* are used by themselves with tacit reference to particular nouns, they become pronouns, as, *two heads are better than one*:—*two* is here a determinative, and *one*, a pronoun. When used abstractedly, as in *two and two* are *four*, they ought to be considered as abstract substantives. With regard to the *Ordinal numbers* they are true adjectives; for they convey an idea of order, and consequently increase the comprehension of the substantive at the same time that they restrict its extension.

In inflected languages, determinatives, like adjectives, vary to agree in gender and number with their substantives; thus they serve to point out these distinctions in the latter part of speech, when not sufficiently marked by its form. This is more particularly the case in French, in which the written form of substantives seldom affords a clue to their gender and number; but, in languages in which the distinction of masculine and feminine is consistent with that of sex, or in which the form of the plural is perceptible both to the eye and to the ear, the determinatives seldom vary in gender or number; such is the case in English. Their invariability permits the same determinative to refer to several consecutive substantives; but, when they are variable, they must be repeated before every noun, as THE *father, mother, and children*, LE *père*, LA *mère et* LES *enfants*. The advantage of the classification we have suggested is here rendered obvious, since it enables us to include many words under each of the rules just given respecting the variability and repetition of the determinatives. By admitting only two articles, these and the other grammatical principles which are common to all determinatives could not be generalised. Hence many grammarians err, by giving, respecting the articles exclusively, rules which apply equally to the other words of the same class.

Determinatives, and especially the definite article, contribute, in a considerable degree, to the precision and perspicuity of discourse; but, useful as they are, several languages dispense

with some of them : and so far, such languages are inconvenient and imperfect. The definite and the indefinite articles do not exist in Latin or in Chinese. There is no indefinite article either in Greek or Irish ; nor is the definite used in Arabic, Danish, or the Scandinavian dialects ; but its place is supplied by particular terminations affixed to the nouns ; for example in Danish *mand* (man), *manden* (the man). In Persian there is no pronominal determinative corresponding to *my, thy,* &c. ; nor in Arabic are there words for *all, each, every, what, whatever.* In some languages there is no simple word to signify any number above five. M. de la Condamine mentions a tribe of savages on the banks of the River Amazon, who have no numeral determinatives beyond three, which number they express by the word *poetazzarorincouroac.*[*]

2. *Pronouns.*

Pronouns, the representatives of nouns, are a sort of algebraic terms which have of themselves no determinate import, but take any which we please to give them. They may be applied to all things and to all persons ; and yet they specify in the most definite manner the subject of thought ; so that they are, at the same time, the most indefinite, and yet the most definite of all words. From their frequent use and their varied combination with the other elements of a sentence, they deserve the attentive consideration of the learner, the more so as they are, in many languages, very irregular in their form, concord, and place. The syntactical rules which regulate the use of pronouns in different idioms, present perhaps greater contrasts than those regarding any other class of words.

Pronouns are a species of nouns, since they express the same ideas as this part of speech ; but, whilst nouns represent objects by the qualities which are proper to them and independently of any other consideration, pronouns represent them in relation to the act of speaking ; they indicate the parts, or *dramatis personæ,* which the subjects of discourse perform. Hence substantives have sometimes been called *absolute nouns,* and pronouns, *relative nouns.* The phrase, *John saw James,* states a simple fact, without showing who speaks, who is spoken to, or who is spoken of ; for we may be ignorant who John and James are ; but the introduction of the pronouns, as I *saw* YOU, I *saw* HIM, YOU *saw*

[*] *Voyage dans l'Intérieur de l'Amérique Méridionale.*

ME, &c., as the case requires, tells both the fact and the actors. Their only business, according to Priscian, is to distinguish individuals.

The proper substantive, as already noticed, represents only one individual, and the common substantive all the individuals of one species, or one genus; but the pronoun may represent all possible beings; its extension is greater and its comprehension smaller than those of any substantive; it is not therefore barely its substitute, as the common definition implies. The extension of the pronoun being essentially unlimited, its import is determined by a substantive and sometimes a proposition expressed before, the place of which it holds.

The classification of pronouns, as every part of their theory, has given rise to many conflicting opinions among grammarians: they are, however, most generally divided into,

1. the *Personal*, as *I, me, thou, thee*, &c., which serve to distinguish the speaker, the person spoken to, and the person or thing spoken of;

2. the *Demonstrative*, as *this, that, former*, &c., which must not be confounded with the same words used as determinatives before substantives;

3. the *Possessive*, as *mine, thine, his*, &c., justly considered by some grammarians as the genitive of *I, thou, he*, &c.;

4. the *Relative*, as *who, whose, what*, &c.; also called *conjunctive* and *subjunctive*, when connecting a subjoined proposition with their antecedents, and *interrogative*, when relating to a subjoined interrogative proposition. The term *relative* is improper, as not characteristic of this species; for all pronouns *relate* to the nouns for which they stand;

5. The *Indefinite*, as *one, either, whatever*, &c. Among these may be mentioned, in French, the pronoun *on*, and, in German, *man*, for which there is no corresponding word in any other language with which we are acquainted; it is used for a subject not specified, as *on dit, man sagt* (it is said).

Some of these, as already noticed, are only the determinatives used separately from the substantives, which fill the office of pronouns by ellipsis, as, in French, the articles *le, la, les* (the), which stand elliptically for personal pronouns. But, although in these two functions, they similarly determine the extent of signification of the substantives to which they relate, they should not be confounded. "The very absence of the nouns to which such words refer only proves," says Sir John Stoddart, "that

they are pronouns."* The rule for distinguishing one species from the other is this: "The genuine Pronoun always stands by itself, assuming the power of a Noun and supplying its place. The genuine article" (determinative) "never stands by itself, but appears at all times associated to something else, requiring a noun for its support as much as attributives or adjectives."†

Pronouns being used instead of nouns are liable to take different forms corresponding to those of the nouns for which they stand, in order to exhibit the more clearly to which they refer, whether a masculine, feminine, or neuter; in the singular, dual, or plural number; a subject, a direct or indirect object; the first, second, or third person. The personal pronouns, especially, often admit of cases, when even the substantives are destitute of them. The French personal pronoun of the third person singular, for example, has four cases, namely, *il* (he), *nominative; le* (him, it), *accusative; en* (of him, of it, &c.), *genitive; lui* (to him, to her) and *y* (to it), *dative*. The same obtains in Italian. In Irish, personal pronouns assume twenty-two different forms significant of relation. The principle which governs the accidental property of variability in pronouns varies considerably in different idioms.

In some languages there are different pronouns to indicate the degree of superiority or inferiority supposed to exist between the speaker and the person spoken to. The Basque presents this peculiarity; it possesses three pronouns singular of the third person to mark these distinctions. In Chinese and Siamese, several expressions are used as substitutes for personal pronouns, to indicate the various degrees of esteem which people entertain or pretend to entertain for each other. The Emperor of China, when speaking of himself, has a personal pronoun, or surname, reserved for his own use, and forbidden, under penalty of death, to any of his subjects. In the reign of Khian-Loung, a Chinese writer was beheaded for having dared to introduce in his book the pronoun of that monarch.

In German, French, Italian, and Spanish, pronouns of the second person singular denote familiarity or contempt. This pronoun in English is used exclusively by a religious sect, or reserved for the elevated and poetical style.

For those who, in learning foreign languages, aim at practice rather than at theory, pronouns should be classified with relation to the manner in which they combine with verbs or prepositions.

* *Philosophy of Language.* † *Hermes.*

The principles which govern these combinations vary materially in different idioms, and hence, the difficulty of this branch of the study.

3. *Prepositions.*

Prepositions express the relations in which the ideas signified by substantives stand to one another. The most common relations are, in some languages, as we have seen, indicated by cases; but, in general, and especially in modern idioms, all such conceptions of the mind are expressed by prepositions. A relation always implies two terms between which is usually placed the preposition which connects them. The second term is called the *complement* or *object* of the preposition, because it completes the idea of relation expressed by that preposition.

In some languages, as Greek, Latin, and German, prepositions vary in their government, being followed by different cases; but they usually govern their complement in the accusative case in modern idioms. This is owing to their being mostly derived from active verbs, which origin can be easily traced in a few, as *except, save, touching, considering, concerning, respecting.* This origin, however, escapes observation in most of them, in consequence of the many changes and contractions which they have undergone in the course of time, and in passing from one language into the other.*

The denomination of preposition, given to this word from the accidental fact of its being placed before another, is unphilosophical, because it conveys no idea of the nature of the word. It is in many instances incorrect; in Basque, Turkish, and several idioms of the Ugro-Tartarian group, it comes after its complement; in Latin, Greek, German, and English, it occasionally also occupies this place. The term *preposition* would apply more justly to determinatives and conjunctions, which always come, the first before substantives and the second before verbs.

Sometimes relations are expressed without the aid of prepositions or cases, by merely placing one of the nouns before the other, as *glass bottle*, bouteille *de* verre, or *en* verre; *ink-bottle* bouteille *à* encre or *à l'*encre. The substantives *glass* and *ink* stand for adjectives corresponding in French to the adjectival phrases *de verre, en verre, à encre,* and *à l'encre.* We have

* See, on this subject, Horne Tooke, *Diversions of Purley.*

already adverted to the advantages arising from this property of convertibility which the English possesses in common with German and a few other languages.

A verb is used substantively after a preposition; it is the participle present in English and the present of the infinitive in Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, and German, which are made the complements of the preposition.

The number of single worded prepositions amounts to about forty-five in Latin and German, forty-four in French, forty-two in English, thirty-three in Italian, eighteen in Greek, and only sixteen in Spanish; they do not much exceed the highest of these numbers in any language. Relations for which there are no particular words in one idiom may always be expressed in another by prepositional phrases formed of adverbs or adverbial phrases and a simple preposition; so, the Latin *præ* is rendered in English by *comparatively with*, and in French, by *en comparaison de;* the French for *above* is *audessus de;* the English for *moyenant* is *by means of.*

The relations which the objects of thought bear to each other, considered apart from these objects, are perhaps the most abstract notions which can be conceived, and hence, the reason why such relations have been marked by modifications in the nouns before particular words were instituted for that purpose. The difficulty of determining in a definite manner the exact comprehension of such words, has introduced much confusion in their application. It would be impossible to tell all that is included under the most familiar prepositions. In all languages the same prepositions often serve to express various and even opposite relations, and the same relations are frequently expressed by different prepositions. This accounts for the strange contradictions frequently observed in corresponding expressions of different idioms, as *to snatch one* FROM *death*, *arracher quelqu'un* À *la mort; to drink* OUT OF *a glass, boire* DANS *un verre.* The dissimilarity which exists in the mode of using this part of speech in different languages presents to foreigners a perplexity which nothing but persevering practice can overcome. The prepositions *à* and *de* are in French striking illustrations of this observation; those who have learned that language by the comparative course will readily acknowledge the difficulty of knowing which to use of these two monosyllables. It is custom not grammar, which teaches all such peculiarities of idioms.

4. *Adverbs.*

Adverbs express particular circumstances of time, place, quantity, or manner, and serve to modify the signification of adjectives, other adverbs, and more especially verbs, from which they take their name. They, in fact, denote attributes of attributes.

Every adverb is equivalent to a preposition and its complement; and when a language has not a word corresponding to an adverb in another language, it can always express it in that compound way; thus, the French adverb *difficilement*, is rendered into English, by *with difficulty;* and the English, *leisurely*, into French, by *à loisir*. Although single worded adverbs, with the exception of the adverbs of manner, are in all languages very limited in their number, the infinite variety of circumstances which may modify our actions, can always be expressed by means of adverbial phrases containing a preposition and a noun or pronoun. Each of these words may also, by an omission of the other, become accidentally an adverb, as *I went and he stayed* BEHIND, that is, *behind me; he stayed* AN HOUR, that is, *during an hour:* the preposition in the first sentence, and the substantive in the second, are adverbs by ellipsis.

Adverbs, being attributive terms, take, for the most part, the same degrees of comparison and form them in the same way as adjectives, when these admit of them. From the similarity of nature in these two parts of speech, it also frequently happens that a preposition and its complement may be either an adjectival or an adverbial phrase, according as it modifies a substantive or a verb; as in French, *un homme à la mode* (a fashionable man), *un terrain de niveau* (a levelled ground); *il s'habille à la mode* (he dresses fashionably), *il les met de niveau* (he puts them on a level); *à la mode* and *de niveau* are adjectival phrases, in the first two examples, and adverbial phrases in the other two.

The number of adverbs, exclusive of adverbs of manner and of prepositions used adverbially, varies from eighty to one hundred and thirty in different languages. The adverbs of manner are very numerous, being formed by the addition to most adjectives of an affix, which implies the idea of manner; thus, in English, *justly* is a contraction of *in a justlike manner;* in the corresponding French, *justement*, and Italian, *giustamente*, the affixes *ment* and *mente* have a similar meaning. Many substantives also, in

English, by taking *ly*, contribute to the formation of a particular class of adverbs, as, *hourly*, *yearly*, *purposely*. In Latin *è*, *er* are the most common characteristic syllables of the adverbs of manner. In Arabic there is not a noun, a verb, or an adjective, which may not be changed into an adverb. In Greek, all proper names of places become adverbs by changes in the final syllables.

From the nature of the adverb it may be seen why the French words *en* (of it, from it, &c.), *y* (to it), *où* (in which), *d' où* (from which), being the equivalents of prepositions and pronouns, may be considered either as pronouns in the oblique case, or as adverbs; why also the ablative absolute and the supines of verbs in Latin are species of adverbs. The adverbs *where*, *whence*, *when*, *why*, *wherefore*, are undoubtedly different oblique cases of the pronoun *which*.

Negatives are adverbial expressions denoting, like other adverbs, particular circumstances of time, place, quantity, or manner, but in a negative sense. Hence they are commonly composed of two terms, one of which is the negative, properly speaking, and the other its complement, signifying the circumstance which modifies it with relation to time, place, quantity, or manner, and which is itself an affirmative expression. For example, in *ne pas*, *ne point*, *pas* signifies *pace; point* signifies *point;* and as a point is less than a pace, so is *ne point* a stronger negative than *ne pas*. The prevalent notion that the French requires two negatives to express one negation is therefore erroneous. In that language, as well as in English, two negatives make an affirmative; in Greek two negatives often enforce instead of destroying each other. In English and German the two terms which constitute the negative are generally united in one word: thus, *not* is a contraction of *no ought*, *never* of *no ever*, *none* of *no one*, &c. In French the terms remain separate, *ne* being placed before the verb, and its complement after. It is by ellipsis that the second term is sometimes used as a negative. This happens when the verb is understood, and with it the first term *ne*, as *l'aimez-vous?* (do you like it?) *pas beaucoup* (not much), that is, *je* NE *l'aime pas beaucoup*.

5. *Conjunctions.*

Conjunctions serve to express relations and connections between propositions; they must consequently come between two verbs. When they apparently connect other parts of speech, the verb is

understood, as, *love your father and mother*, that is, *love your father and love your mother; it is red or blue*, that is, *it is red or it is blue; I sing, but not well*, that is, *I sing, but I do not sing well. And, or, but*, and *though* are the only conjunctions which can be used elliptically before words which are not verbs.

The true place of a conjunction being between two propositions, it is by inversion it commences a sentence: the logical order of, SINCE *it rains, I will not go out*, is, *I will not go out* SINCE *it rains.*

The number of simple conjunctions is very small, not exceeding forty in the generality of languages; but deficiency is easily supplied by conjunctional phrases formed with verbs, prepositions, or adverbs, as, *suppose that, besides that, so that.* In fact, conjunctions, like the other secondary words, are elliptical words or contracted phrases, an origin so obvious in some of them that they may with equal propriety be called words or phrases.

The government of conjunctions is, in the study of a language, a source of much perplexity, which the few rules given in grammars are unable to remove: we are told, for example, that *if* governs the subjunctive or the indicative, according as it implies contingency or not; yet how few English persons know when to use either mood after that conjunction. The government of conjunctions varies not only for the different conjunctions of one language, but for the corresponding conjunctions in different languages, as,

WHEN *you* COME *to-morrow* (present of the indicative), QUAND *vous* VIENDREZ *demain* (future tense).

IF *he* SHOULD *come* (conditional), *s'il* VENAIT (imperfect of the indicative).

BEFORE *you* CAME (indicative), AVANT QUE *vous* VINSSIEZ (subjunctive).

Prepositions, adverbs, and conjunctions, having, in many instances, a common origin and being often converted one into the other, are easily confounded. The most eminent grammarians differ in their opinion respecting the nature and classification of these words; it is not, therefore, surprising that the generality of grammars should differ in the lists which they give of them.

The following parallel may, perhaps, assist in discriminating between these three species of words. Prepositions have always, for their complements, *nouns* or *pronouns*, as also verbs in the infinitive, used substantively; whereas, Adverbs generally follow and Conjunctions precede verbs used as such, as,

He went out BEFORE *me, il sortit* AVANT *moi:* (*before* and *avant* are prepositions).

He went out BEFORE *I saw him, il sortit* AVANT QUE *je le visse:* (*before* is a conjunction, and *avant que* a conjunctional phrase).

He went out BEFORE, *il sortit* AUPARAVANT: (*before* and *auparavant* are adverbs).

Prepositions govern personal pronouns in the objective case; Conjunctions are followed by pronouns in the nominative, as *have a fire* FOR *me,* FOR *I am cold; ayez du feu* POUR *moi,* CAR *j'ai froid.*

Adverbs, different from Prepositions and Conjunctions, do not connect words or propositions; they mark no relations between substantives or sentences, but modify the import of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; they can always be changed into phrases formed of a preposition with its complement: this is not the case with Prepositions and Conjunctions. Prepositions require nouns, and Conjunctions, verbs, to complete the ideas of relation which they express; whereas, Adverbs require no complements; but serve themselves to complete the idea expressed by the verb.

Verbs cannot be used interrogatively with their governing Conjunctions; they may, with the Adverbs that modify their meaning.

To complete the distinction between these words, we may add that Prepositions are to substantives what Conjunctions are to verbs; and Adverbs are to verbs, adjectives, and adverbs what adjectives are to substantives.

These strictures on the elements of speech, conformable to the principles laid down by the best philologists, and, especially, by Silvestre de Sacy,* to whose work we are considerably indebted, are not given as an introduction to the study of languages: they are offered to young teachers to assist them in explaining to their advanced pupils, the technology of grammar, in a manner more philosophical than is found in the generality of school-books. They exhibit the nature of words, their relative importance, the principal modifications to which they are liable, the general principles of grammar, the existence of affinities between some languages, and of differences in the genius of others. For more ample information on particular principles, the anxious inquirer must apply to the grammar of the language which is the object of his study: it is its office to unfold the collocation and variations of the words, the peculiar forms which characterise the syntax of the language, and the exceptions to the principles which we have

* *Principes de Grammaire Générale.*

laid down. However, the few examples we have given among the numberless peculiarities and forms of speech that escape classification, and apparently follow no law but that of custom, sufficiently prove the difficulty of the study, and demonstrate that reading standard works and conversing with good speakers, are the surest means of gaining familiarity with the idiomatic construction of a language.

The diversity of means resorted to in the expression of thought, shows that the principles of universal grammar are very few, and that we should guard against hasty generalisation of such as are applicable to any one idiom, a common error of persons unacquainted with many languages. It should be maintained, as a general maxim in the study of languages, that the custom of one or even of many, cannot be urged as a rule in others. It was seen in the preceding Book, that the study of the Latin grammar, does not, as some people believe, teach the principles of all languages, or preclude the necessity of learning the national grammar. But, although the principles of the native tongue cannot be elicited by the study of those which are peculiar to a foreign one, this object will be fully accomplished by the constant practice of translating one into the other. It is, in fact, the differences between the structure and genius of languages which, forced upon the learner's notice by translation, teach him the grammar of his own idiom.

With respect to the laws of general grammar, although they may, in great measure, be inferred by induction from facts collected from many languages, their safest foundation will be found in the constitution of the mind, because its action in the generation of ideas and in their relation is less diversified in mankind, than are their forms of speech. The many intricacies of languages, and the multitude of considerations involved in their study, in consequence of the want of correspondence between the words and principles of one, and the words and principles of another, tend to show also, that their complete attainment cannot be effected without considerable time, attention, and practice.

CHAPTER II.

STUDY OF WORDS.

SECT. I.—WHAT CLASS OF WORDS SHOULD BE STUDIED FIRST.

THE words of the first class are the indispensable materials with which the edifice of language is raised: no sentence can be formed without their being either expressed or understood. The words of the second class are the accessory materials, the binding links of discourse; and, although acting as mere auxiliaries to the words of the first class, they are, as we shall see, those most required in the early stages of the study.

Two questions present themselves: of the numerous words which constitute a language, what are those which should be known first? and in what manner are they to be learned? To arrive at a correct solution of these questions, we should bear in mind the different objects to be accomplished by the study of words.

The branches which first demand the attention of a beginner are, as has been shown, *reading* and *hearing* the foreign language. Reading, especially, which, being the foundation of the other departments of the study, cannot be commenced too early. Means must therefore be employed to facilitate translation, which is the preliminary step to it, and to avoid annoyance, as well as loss of time, resulting from constant application to the dictionary.

Committing substantives to memory will not assist in this: the most extensive vocabularies of nouns contain only a fraction of the many thousands found in a language, and, small as that fraction is, compared with the whole, it is yet too large to be easily retained. The absence of connection between these words must tend greatly to increase the difficulty of fixing them on the memory: the greater number of them, not being met with in the course of reading or in daily conversation, are usually forgotten as soon as learned. Even if they were remembered

they would be of little assistance in translating. The substantives, adjectives, and verbs vary in every work and in every conversation, according to the nature of the subject treated. Different subjects, different styles, have terms peculiar to each, and rarely to be met with in works to which they do not properly belong. A student might translate several volumes, or listen to foreigners for a long time without meeting or hearing one of those words which he has been at so much trouble to learn.

As a preparation for translation, the study of substantives yields in usefulness to that of the words of the second class, which nearly all enter into every kind of composition,—into the most trivial conversation and the most philosophical dissertation—into the most familiar and the most elevated style—into prose and poetry.

As words of the first class often bear various shades of meaning according to the manner in which they are applied, it is from the connected discourse in which they are incorporated, and not from vocabularies, that their precise and manifold import can be properly ascertained. In imitation, therefore, of what occurs in acquiring the vernacular tongue, the knowledge of these words ought rather to be gained by hearing and reading, than to be made the means of learning these branches. The more extensive and diversified the reading, the greater will be the probability of knowing the different meanings attached to such words.

With the words of the second class it is otherwise; there is less inconvenience in learning them apart from the sentences into which they enter, because having generally but one signification, it is indifferent whether the learner is made acquainted with that signification in a vocabulary or in the course of reading. Expedition and facility are then the only motives of preference in the mode of learning them; and an acquaintance with them is the more certainly gained, as they are, for the most part, invariable. However rapidly or easily they are acquired, the frequency of their recurrence will fix them in the mind.

If we now turn our attention to the French language, which we have more particularly selected to illustrate our remarks, we shall find that its *substantives*, *adjectives*, and *verbs* so generally resemble those which correspond to them in English, that the sense of three fourths of them can be guessed at without great effort of imagination. Not so with the secondary words; there is no clue by which to come at their meanings; for there is no similarity of spelling in the corresponding English words.

The English language has derived from the French and also from the Latin, in common with the French, a considerable number of *substantives*, *adjectives*, and *verbs;* but, with the exception of a few, it has not borrowed *pronouns*, *articles*, *prepositions*, *conjunctions*, or *adverbs*. These words had received their established form and acceptation in ages prior to the introduction of the Latin and Norman French ; being more used than the others, they had got a firmer footing in the habits of the people, and they permanently retained their original form whilst a large supply of other terms was introduced from more modern idioms. Having no resemblance in spelling to their French equivalents, they often embarrass inexperienced translators more than those of the first class. It is therefore the more necessary to study them well.

This task does not present great difficulty, as the memory of a child can retain them all with ease. They amount only to a few hundred, whereas the words of the first class exceed 40,000, even in the least copious of the European languages which are worthy to be made part of the instruction of youth ; and yet the secondary words are of such frequent use, particularly in French, that they recur in any discourse oftener than the others. Any person may be convinced of this fact by opening a French book and counting the words of each class in a page. It will generally be found that every line of a common duodecimo volume contains four, five, and often more of the words of this class. In number they are not one fiftieth of the other words : but in composition they appear as two to one ; so that each word of the second class is used, at an average a hundred times oftener than a word of the first class.

These observations sufficiently show that familiarity with the words of the second class is very useful as a preparation for the translation of foreign authors. Were it desirable to speak and write a foreign language in the first period of the study, these words would still claim precedence over those of the first class, as affording greater facilities in the attainment of this double object ; for it is evident that, if they prove the most useful auxiliaries in interpreting the ideas of others, by reason of their frequent occurrence, they must be equally so when we wish to express our own. It has, it is true, been before remarked that by the natural process, a young child almost exclusively uses words of the first class ; the vagueness and simplicity of his unconnected thoughts render substantives,

adjectives, and verbs sufficient to express his simple wants or to name the sensible objects which affect him; but it is otherwise with a person who avails himself of the knowledge of a language acquired by the comparative method; his judgment being formed, he has occasion to convey definite, complex, and connected ideas; this cannot be done without a thorough knowledge of the words of the second class. Hence it is that these words must early engage the attention of learners.

The first question being thus solved, we will now examine the second, and ascertain in what manner words are to be learned for the practical purposes of language.

SEC. II.—ACQUAINTANCE WITH WORDS.

1. *Mode of learning words as a preparation for reading and hearing.*

Words are required for different objects, and may be studied in different ways; for the means should always be consistent with the end. A mere acquaintance with words, that is, the power of recognising them when they are presented to the eye or the ear, is sufficient for the purpose of understanding a writer or a speaker; but they must be thoroughly known and deeply engraved on the memory for speaking or writing.

The *acquaintance* with words should not, therefore, be confounded with the *knowledge* of them. It should precede that knowledge, since *reading* and *hearing* are required before *speaking* and *writing:* in his own language, a child recognises words and understands them for a long time before he can employ them.

For the first two objects—*reading* and *hearing*—the student who makes use of a vocabulary, should, without committing to memory or pronouncing the foreign words, only endeavour to render their orthography sufficiently familiar to his eye, and his teacher's pronunciation of them equally familiar to his ear, so as to be able, on seeing or hearing them again, at once to recognise them and know their signification. He may, without running the risk of mispronouncing them in the absence of his teacher, familiarise himself with their meaning, by trying, on seeing the foreign words only, to name their equivalents in the native tongue. A parent, anxious to assist his young child in acquiring the first elements of a foreign language, and to prepare him for translating the works written in it, may, even without possessing

any knowledge of that language himself, examine him in this acquisition, by pointing at the foreign words, and desiring him to state those of his own language which correspond to them.

In a similar way, and as a preparation for understanding the spoken language, the learner should have his ear exercised in hearing his teacher pronounce the foreign words, with the written form of which he is acquainted; he should, on hearing them, endeavour to tell the corresponding native words.

Concurrently with the study of the words of the second class, as an introduction to reading and hearing, we would earnestly recommend the learner to attend to the most useful verbs, and, particularly, in the case of modern languages, to those which correspond with *to have* and *to be;* for these verbs, being used both by themselves and as auxiliaries, occur much more frequently than the others. An acquaintance with their terminations and with those of regular conjugations, both in the written and the spoken form, could, from their similarity, be gained in a few hours of attentive study and practice with the teacher; and would lead to familiarity with the distinctive marks of particular moods, tenses, and persons of other verbs, as they are met with in reading and conversation.

Verbs, especially those which belong to the languages of Southern Europe, that is, to the idioms of the classical group, present numerous inflections, the import of which should, from the outset, be carefully ascertained; because on these depend the number, person, time, and other circumstances which materially affect a proposition. An ignorance of these would, at every step, impede progress in translation.

In languages which admit of cases, or other modifications in their substantives and adjectives, a knowledge of declensions would also considerably assist learners in comprehending the written and the spoken expression. But it is, above all, as a means of finding nouns and verbs in the dictionary, that an acquaintance with their various inflections would prove useful.

An acquaintance with the accessory words and inflections of verbs, such as we have now suggested, is gained with little trouble and in little time, and is sufficient, as a preparation, for acquiring the first two branches. It is also consistent with the learner's ignorance of the foreign sounds, at this early stage of his study, as he could not then learn words by rote without acquiring a bad pronunciation. A visual *acquaintance* with words, answers nearly all that is needed for the acquisition of

ancient languages, which are now studied only to gain intimacy with the thoughts and style of the classic writers; but a thorough *knowledge* of them is indispensable in the case of modern languages, which are to be spoken and written as well as read.

Further facility in acquiring the art of reading will be afforded to the learner if the roots of words are presented to his notice, whenever occasion offers: a knowledge of them is particularly useful in languages which, like the Greek and German, possess in themselves the source of copiousness. Real and rapid progress will be made in Greek, from the moment that its three hundred roots are known, and the radical syllable is perceived at the first glance through all the forms of a verb. With this knowledge the student will be greatly assisted through all the intricacies of the different dialects and poetical licenses, since that syllable is to be found in all the modifications of the verb, its compounds and derivatives; and, in all the words of which it is the basis, whether verbs, substantives, adjectives, or adverbs, it preserves its own energy and primitive signification.

Sanscrit presents, in its system of roots with their affixes and suffixes, a perfect model of grammatical structure, and the best example of an original language. It is rich beyond all comparison in those resources from which arise vigour and copiousness; all its words are resolvable into elements appertaining to itself alone.

Familiarity with radical words, in any language, by leading to speedy acquaintance with their derivatives and compounds, greatly extends the power of understanding the written language; and whilst progress in reading is promoted, the practice of this art cannot fail, by a natural reaction, to impress the knowledge of the roots more deeply in the mind of the learner, and to afford him an inexhaustible means of multiplying expressions according to his wants.

2. *Reading,—a means of gaining acquaintance with words.*

However useful an acquaintance with the words of the second class and with conjugations, declensions, and roots may prove as an introduction to the acquisition of the first branch, it must be admitted that it is not indispensable, especially when the initiatory reading books contain the explanations which a beginner requires.

It is a disputed point whether words should be learned as a

preparation for translation, or whether translation should be commenced at once. We not only adopt the latter opinion, but we go farther and assert that translating and studying the foreign authors is the best means of gaining acquaintance with words, especially those of the first class; because, agreeably to a principle of our nature, ideas, taking a stronger hold of the mind than their arbitrary signs, will powerfully assist in retaining these signs if they are made the primary object of instruction. This can be effected only by presenting the words to the learners, not in vocabularies, but in connected discourse.

In the natural order of the perceptive action consciousness passes from the entire object to the details, from the whole which is a concrete to the part which is an abstract notion. A child, following the analytical process of nature in acquiring his own language, does not begin by committing detached words to memory, or construing unconnected sentences with given words; every element of speech which comes within his practice in hearing or reading, is always incorporated in sentences expressive of complete propositions; and it is by comparing these sentences that he first notices their elements. He arrives at the meaning of words through the ideas expressed by sentences, not at the meaning of sentences through that of words. The proposition is everything to the child: he scarcely attends to the individual words, and yet he firmly retains them, in consequence of their association with the ideas on which his mind is bent. That admirable spirit of inquiry which nature gives to the child is soon checked, if we present to him words instead of the ideas which he wants. The idea should, in every department of knowledge, be the primary aim of the learner: the sign will, as a matter of course, be retained when the idea is clear to the mind. It is by adherence to this fundamental principle that reason can be called to the aid of memory in learning either the native or a foreign tongue.

To begin the study of a foreign language by the explanation and translation of works written in it, the propriety of which practice was shown in Book v., is in accordance with this principle: and, by means of an interpretation of its words, this language can be rendered as accessible to the learner as is the native tongue to a young child through the language of action. We will explain, in Chap. I. of the following Book, the nature of these interpreting works and the mode of using them.

To acquire words through the ideas in reading or hearing, not

only teaches their various import, but it also fixes them on the mind with all the vividness and permanency of impression resulting from discovery. They are learned, like the native words and phraseology, in daily practice; and, like all daily occurrences of our lives, remain on the memory without effort on our part, and as deposits from the stream of experience. Many give, as we do, the preference to this mode of acquiring words. Among others, we will mention Radonvilliers, who says: "The practice, recommended by some authors, of learning by heart lists of detached words, is more fatiguing than needful. Wait until the same words occur in the course of reading; they will be engraved in the memory with less trouble, because their connection with other words will assist in retaining their signification."*

Introductory books, consisting of a text accompanied by literal translations, or other explanations, would tend greatly to facilitate the reading of foreign authors, through which familiarity with the words is to be gained. But, whatever be the assistance afforded to the learner, if he is made, at the outset, to translate none but simple and familiar compositions, he will surmount the obstacles presented by unknown words much more rapidly than is commonly thought. The words of the second class, being very limited and recurring repeatedly in every discourse, must soon become familiar to the learner. With regard to words of the first class, we have shown that they offer little difficulty; those, especially, which belong to the subject of the book, cannot fail, from their frequent recurrence, to be soon acquired.

Similarity of inflection, or other orthographical characteristic in words of the first class, leads, by analogy, to the signification of these words. Thus, many of them have one common significant initial or final syllable, which renders each word a clue to the others, by the general idea which it implies, as, in English,

fore (denoting priority, precedence), *foresight, foremost, to foretell*, &c.

mis („ evil tendency), *misconduct, mistakable, to mislead*, &c.

over („ excess), *overmatch, overlong, to overflow*, &c.

out („ direction outwards), *outline, outbound, to outrun*, &c.

un („ negation), *unkindness, unable, to unsay*, &c.

under („ inferiority, subjection), *underpart, undermost, to undergo*, &c.

up („ direction upwards), *upstart, upright, to uphold*, &c.

* *De la Manière d'Apprendre les Langues.*

To these must be added the compound words already adverted to (Book VI., Chap. III., Sect. IV.), whose prefixes are Latin and Greek prepositions.

Among the significant terminations, we may notice the following which respectively characterise substantives, adjectives, and verbs:

er and *or* designate the person who acts, *speaker, painter*, &c.; *narrator, inspector*, &c.

hood, ness, and *ty*, mark the state or the presence of a quality, *manhood, falsehood*, &c.; *greatness, sweetness*, &c.; *morality, probity*, &c.

ship and *ate* impart the idea of rank or condition, *lordship, citizenship*, &c.; *magistrate, cardinalate*, &c.

ful and *ous* convey an idea of abundance, *beautiful, artful*, &c.; *humourous, calamitous*, &c.

less signifies privation, *fatherless, harmless*, &c.

ive denotes capacity, *destructive, nutritive*, &c.

able and *ible* imply liability, or capacity in a passive sense, *admirable, declinable*, &c; *destructible, visible*, &c.

ly and *like* express similarity to the things meant by the substantives to which they are affixed, *kingly, heavenly*, &c.; *gentleman-like, soldier-like*, &c.

ish indicates a quality akin, or approximating to, the idea conveyed by the radical word, *childish, blackish, popish*, &c.

en, fy, and *ise* involve in verbs the idea of imparting the quality expressed by the substantive or adjective to which they are affixed, *strengthen, lengthen*, &c.; *simplify, purify*, &c.; *fertilise, equalise*, &c.

For other significant terminations, see the Section referred to above. Similar analogies in etymology are found in almost all languages, and considerably facilitate to foreigners the reading of works written in them, as they facilitate to the natives the understanding of oral expression. The mind seizes with surprising rapidity the analogies and generalisations of language.

The same principles of induction apply to the inflections indicative of declensions and conjugations: if *deorum* means *of the* gods, *dominorum* must mean *of the* lords; if *doctior doctissimus* mean *more* learned, *very* learned, *amplior, amplissimus* must mean *larger, very* large; if *amabat* means he *was loving*, *regnabat, legebat* must mean he *was* reigning, he *was* reading; and the same in all the other inflections of substantives, adjectives, and verbs. A learner thus becomes practically acquainted with declensions and conjugations. In a similar manner also all words with one common root are clues to each

other: when *dubito* (I doubt) is understood, all the others, *dubitatio*, *dubitator*, *dubitabilis*, *dubitans*, &c. are easily discovered. Every word acquired leads to a comprehension of other words.

The same substantive accompanied by various adjectives applicable to it, the same adjective attached to several substantives, the same verb placed between different subjects and objects, and, vice versâ, the same subject and object connected with various verbs, continually occasion comparisons and judgments which facilitate to the learner the comprehension of the foreign writer. These comparisons assist in showing the real value of an expression by the function which it fulfils in discourse, and that function by the value which it bears.

The first volumes which the learner translates ought to be considered exclusively as means of familiarising him with words. Such *reading-vocabularies*, if we may so call them, composed of connected words and conveying ideas to the mind of the learner, must be far more interesting, instructive, and impressive, than the tedious lists of unconnected words with which children are often tormented at their entrance upon the study of a foreign language. Works may be selected which will cultivate the taste, the judgment, and the heart of the young reader, at the same time that they will familiarise him with the words and idioms of the language; whereas all those collections of words, from the "Janua Linguarum" of Commenius down to Descarrière's Vocabulary, are destitute of intellectuality, are difficult to be learned, and over-load the memory with materials which, for the most part, do not find their application.

We will subsequently advert to the use of vocabularies; but, for the present, will only observe that learning unconnected words is inconsistent with solid instruction, which aims at the knowledge of things rather than of words. This mechanical exercise, by the time it consumes and the irksomeness attendant upon it, prevents the acquisition of useful information and the mental discipline which should be expected from the study of a foreign language. Vocabularies fail even in their special object; for they often lead astray in the signification of words. In fact, comparative lexicography is based on a false principle, the identity of meaning in apparently corresponding terms in different idioms.

Terms exist, it is true, which, from the universality and permanency of the things meant, do not admit of diversity of signification and have their equivalents in every language:

among these may be mentioned the words which denote natural objects, the sensations of living beings, atmospheric phenomena, and the natural properties, relations, and actions of things. But a large number of corresponding terms in any two languages suggest very different notions to the respective people who speak them, such as—

1. Names of things subject to peculiar modifications in every country, as dress, food, furniture, measures, diversions, and most words denoting commodities, occupations, and modes of life, the correct knowledge of which depends on acquaintance with the manners and customs of the people, gained either by residing among them or reading works descriptive of their social condition.

2. Terms relative to the religion of a country, to its civil and political institutions, moral and intellectual condition, social distinctions and relations, the meaning of which can be ascertained only by minute study of the origin, history, character, and civilisation of that country, or by close investigation of that meaning as found in standard works, and by comparison of the various passages in which they are introduced.

In languages derived from one common source, or one from the other, we find a considerable number of words which, although similarly spelled and apparently corresponding, have, in their signification, marked shades of difference which can be elicited only by frequent intercourse with good speakers, or diligent study of good writers. It should then be laid down as a fundamental principle in learning foreign languages, that acquaintance with words is always commensurate with extent of thoughtful reading.

Our strictures on the practice of reading as a means of gaining familiarity with the written words apply equally to the practice of hearing a foreign language spoken. The instructor should read to his pupils until they are able to understand conversation. In Book IX., we detail the process by which this end is to be gained; and, for the present, will only observe that the practice of reading to the learners should follow in regular succession their practice in translation, that is, each original passage which they translate by themselves should subsequently be read to them.

When the written form of a foreign language is once familiar to the learner, an acquaintance with the articulate words which it represents will be gained in a time considerably shorter than that required for the first acquisition. The reason of this is that the elements—the words—with which the learner must become

acquainted to master completely the first branch, are extremely numerous, and therefore cannot all come under notice, except in very extensive practice; whilst the elementary sounds and articulations of which these words are composed are very limited and, by their frequent recurrence, soon rendered familiar. It may also be remarked, that the power of understanding oral expression being altogether independent of the ability to speak, it may be completely attained, though the learner should be unable to overcome the difficulty of the pronunciation, or even before he has attempted to utter a word of the language he is learning.

SECT. III.—KNOWLEDGE OF WORDS.

1. *Mode of learning Words for speaking and writing.*

To acquire the arts of *speaking* and *writing* a foreign language, a mere acquaintance with words would not suffice; a ready recollection of them is indispensable in practice. Words must be so intimately associated in the mind with the ideas which they represent that the thought will at once recall the expression. This will soon be effected, if the words of the second class and the model conjugations of verbs be thoroughly committed to memory, and the knowledge of them rendered permanent by frequent employment in the expression of thought.

With this view, the learner should study the foreign words in a manner the reverse of that which has already been suggested for reading; he should endeavour, while concealing the foreign words, to recollect them on seeing the corresponding native words. But previously to committing them to memory, he should secure their pronunciation, by frequently hearing his teacher pronounce them, and endeavouring, in repeating them after him, to imitate his pronunciation.

In a class the pupils can repeat the words in chorus. This will give them confidence, which is essential to acquire clear and unconstrained pronunciation. If they repeated singly not only would much time be lost, but, fearing to be laughed at by each other, their utterance would be neither so free nor so natural. By pronouncing together, they do not set a bad example to each other; and, when they repeat in unison, as would soon be the case in a well-disciplined class, the professor would notice and correct individual faults, as easily as the leader of an orchestra can detect the slightest discord.

In inflected languages the last syllables of nouns and verbs should be pronounced in a particularly clear manner; for these inflections mark the relations of words and the distinctions of person, number, tense, and mood. The terminations of substantives and verbs in those languages are always emphatical.

The correct pronunciation of a few verbs and of the secondary words would, to a great extent, secure the possession of the whole pronunciation, since these words form, as already remarked, the greater portion of discourse. But it is only in languages, the pronunciation of which is based on fixed principles, that unknown words can be safely pronounced by analogy. In the Book on Hearing, we shall minutely explain the exercises which lead to the complete acquisition of this part of a living language.

Learners would secure the knowledge of the accessory words, if, after having heard them embodied in short phrases by the teacher, they were frequently questioned on them in a promiscuous way, and in combination with the other words. The determinatives, for example, being, each variously placed before a few substantives of different gender and number, selected for this object by the teacher, would, with the changes they undergo in the foreign language, be soon rendered extremely familiar to the learner. The same process should be applied to the learning of the other words of that class.

Communication of thought in social intercourse, is accomplished by combined, not by detached words. Nomenclature and syntax do not form two distinct parts of study for the young child who acquires his own language, as they do for those who learn a foreign language by the ordinary process: the child no sooner knows a few elements of speech, than he combines them; he never uses a substantive without a determinative, or a preposition without its object; he connects names of things with those of their qualities; in stating an action, he mentions the object to which it refers, or the circumstances by which it is modified; in a word, he constantly forms small but complete propositions: phrases, not words, are his aim.

A language is not so much a system of words as of phrases: sentences alone represent complete ideas, and answer the purposes of social intercourse. Words, although useful as constituent parts of phraseology, become valueless when taken separately; those of the second class, especially, have no value, except when incorporated in sentences. Words should not, therefore, be merely repeated in the unconnected way in which they are found

in vocabularies. Such a process must have been first introduced by teachers, more anxious to save themselves trouble, than to give to their pupils the benefit of their own knowledge. An ignorant person, book in hand, can make a child say such lessons: a well-informed and conscientious professor, must fill a more dignified office and render more useful services to his pupils; by making the phraseology the basis of his examination, he will cause them to express ideas, rather than repeat words; and will exercise their judgment as well as their memory: he will teach them the syntax with the nomenclature of the language.

As the study of words is only a preparation for the more important exercise of applying them in speech, when the pupils are with their professor the recitation of them should never make part of the business with him; it should be done in his absence.

Neglect in the fulfilment of their task can always be detected, when they, in a class, form phrases into which these words are made to enter. In schools, the monitorial system may be advantageously resorted to, in the examination of junior learners in the words of the second class, the conjugations of verbs, and the declensions of substantives, as also in all mnemonic lessons.*

2. *Of Verbs—Mode of learning them.*

Of all the words necessary for the communication of ideas, verbs are undoubtedly the most useful, as they are the most intricate and the most difficult to be acquired. A thorough knowledge of them is indispensable, and the *sine quâ non* of conversation. It is impossible to assert anything, to ask the simplest question—in short, to advance any proposition, affirmative or negative, without using a verb.

This word *par excellence*, constituted as it is in cultivated languages, with its moods, tenses, persons, numbers, and various inflections, is the most ingenious of instituted signs, the vital element of discourse, and the masterpiece of language. It expresses in itself a judgment and a proposition. It gives life to all the other words, which remain complete nonentities until they are associated with it. The verb must therefore be known in all its varieties and in all its forms.

The great purport of intellectual communication in conversa-

* For practical suggestions on the application of the monitorial method to classical teaching, see Professor Pillan's *Rationale of School Discipline*, ch. i.

tion or composition is either to affirm or deny, to ask questions or answer them. These different forms of expression, the manifestation of man's judgment and inquisitive disposition, are equally useful, and claim the same degree of attention. In the familiar intercourse of social life we have constant occasion to ask questions, to request favours and information; and when questions are asked they may be answered affirmatively or negatively. The different forms of the verb, serving to express these different modifications of a proposition, should therefore be studied from the outset, that the learner may be prepared to speak under all circumstances of social intercourse.

Verbs should be constantly conjugated in the four different ways in which they may be used, as the interrogative and negative forms are often combined, namely—

1. Affirmatively . . . . . Ex. I have, *j'ai*.
2. Interrogatively . . . . . „ Have I? *ai-je?*
3. Negatively . . . . . „ I have not, *je n'ai pas*.
4. Interrogatively and negatively „ Have I not? *n'ai-je pas?*

Without a complete knowledge of these four forms, it would be impossible to take part in the simplest conversation. Two persons can scarcely interchange ideas for five minutes without having occasion to use all these modes of speech. Learners should then from the outset, study the interrogative and negative forms, as well as the simple affirmative. They should also, especially in French and in Italian, early master the reflective form, which, from its frequent occurrence in these languages assumes a high degree of importance. Nothing but constant practice will enable them to overcome the perplexity arising from the arrangement of the various words which enter into these combined forms.

Grammarians do not agree respecting the classification of conjugations; some including among the regular what others place among the irregular, and conversely; but this does not affect the orthography, which is the same in all classifications. A thorough knowledge of the verbs given as models will lead to the acquisition of many others. The student should not be satisfied with learning these paradigms; he should familiarise himself with other verbs, similiarly conjugated, and especially with those which most frequently occur in conversation.

Learning conjugations will, in some languages, be greatly facilitated by attending to the manner in which various tenses

are formed from a few radical parts of the verb. An instructor should not neglect to explain this formation to his pupils.

Those who are assisted in retaining the material form of language by writing, may transcribe or write under dictation a few conjugations in the different forms above mentioned. The utility of this practice will be the greater in proportion as the orthography conforms the less to the pronunciation. But, that the powers of the mind may be made to bear more intensely on the verbs, we would recommend learners to write them from memory, afterwards to compare their performance with the book, and correct the errors. In public instruction they may be occasionally desired to write the verbs or parts of them, on a black board. This mode of examination will tend to fix their attention; and by exhibiting the inflections and irregularities of verbs, it will supply the deficiencies of those who may not have studied them sufficiently in the intervals of the lessons.

Learners would bring judgment in aid of memory if they compared the different persons of each tense, and the different tenses of each mood with one another, as also the same persons throughout all the tenses, and the same tenses throughout various verbs. Clear perception of their differences and resemblances would greatly tend to impress them on the mind. Synoptical tables of verbs would prove very useful for this purpose. But in any case, one verb being thoroughly learned, other verbs will be rendered easy by a reference to it. A mastery of the first conjugation in French secures the conjugation of the four thousand verbs which it comprises. In any circumstances memory cannot fail to be aided by comparing the forms of speech to be acquired with those already known, and by referring them to principles of classification and derivation. At the same time that this exercise in comparison and analogy gives to learners a command of the inflections and irregularities of verbs, it also cultivates in them the useful mental habit of classification, and leads them to discover the principles which regulate conjugations and the formation of tenses.

In the preliminary act of learning the verbs, the student should principally attend to the ideas conveyed by them, as modified by their different forms and inflections. The metaphysical denominations by which moods and tenses are designated, and on which so few grammarians agree, are only of secondary importance in the practice. It will be time enough to dwell on these technical

terms when, having gained some proficiency in the practical knowledge of the language, he wishes to study the science of grammar.

As soon as the knowledge of a few verbs has rendered their terminations and forms sufficiently familiar to recall at once their respective meanings, the learner, in going through the exercise of conjugating them, should dispense with repeating the English in connection with the foreign verbs ; but, as he utters the different parts, he should mentally associate with them the ideas they represent. This process would save time, and be a good preparation for thinking in the foreign language.

3. *Of the practical application of verbs to the expression of ideas.*

Sentences are the units of speech, as propositions are the units of thought : the sentence, of which the verb is always an essential element, must be completed by the addition of other words. Isolated words, to whatever class they belong, have often but vague signification ; they require to be incorporated in phrases to have their various acceptations determined, and thus be made available for speaking or writing. Besides, the great difficulty in using a language consists not so much in knowing its words, as in knowing how to arrange them. The learner, then, ought, at first, under the direction of his teacher, and, afterwards, by himself, frequently to combine with the verbs some substantives, pronouns, or adverbs, which may complete the sense. He should conjugate propositions rather than verbs. The simple conjugation conveys nothing to the understanding, and fatigues children by its monotony ; whilst conjugating by propositions must interest them, as it offers to their minds ideas as well as words, and makes them conscious of the usefulness of their labour. Words are also better remembered when combined into phrases, than when unconnected ; because association and judgment come then in aid of memory.

As in music the practice of the scales is a preparatory step to the execution of tunes, so the conjugation of verbs in all their forms is a preparatory step to the formation of sentences. Their application in conversation or composition is the great end proposed in learning them. Confining one's-self to the parrot-like task of conjugating them is complete loss of time. Acquaintance with the conjugation being once gained, the student should go

farther, and practise each verb promiscuously, in connection with the words that usually accompany it in the communication of ideas. But, as hearing ought to have precedence of speaking, the professor should, at first, utter models of pronunciation and phraseology in the foreign language, by introducing the different parts of the verbs in a variety of sentences, affirmative, interrogative, and negative, which his pupils should translate *viva voce* into their own. When they have heard many such sentences, and are well impressed with the pronunciation and construction, they will find no difficulty in forming analogous combinations on being given the corresponding English. The same verb, by means of words annexed to it, may form an endless variety of expressions, and will afford a learner, for several sittings with his teacher, abundance of practice in hearing and speaking; it should be dwelt on, until its practical application to the expression of thought is clearly understood, and has become familiar. Analogy, the most efficient guide in acquiring the art of speaking, will facilitate the mode of applying other verbs to the same practical purpose. This analogical process of phrase-making will be explained more fully in Book X.

The frequent and diversified application of the same verbs to useful phraseology is not only the surest means of gaining power over the verbal inflections of the language, and recollecting both the verbs and the words associated with them; it is also a powerful incentive to exertion and perseverance. Repetition is a vital principle in the acquisition of language. The practice of including in each day's lesson those previously learned should, as much as possible, be applied to whatever the child commits to memory: as fortunes are acquired by saving, rather than by making money, so knowledge is secured by retaining, rather than by learning lessons. In the usual routine of task-learning, so little are children impressed with the idea that they ought to retain what they learn, that they would consider it a downright injustice on the part of their instructor, if he expected them to repeat a lesson which they had said a fortnight before.

4. *Of learning the words of a vocabulary.*

In an inflected language, learners will gain familiarity with the declensions of substantives and adjectives, if, at each lesson, they incorporate a few of these words in short sentences,

illustrative of their concord and various cases, similarly to what was suggested for the verbs in the foregoing Section. Such sentences will not only explain the use and power of the inflections, as well as the precise import of the words thus combined, but will also considerably aid the memory in retaining both the words and the relations expressed by their inflections: because association and analogy concur in impressing them on the mind, while repetition renders habitual the intelligent use of inflected forms.*

The study of substantives and adjectives should, in the commencement, be confined to such as may secure to the learner a knowledge of their inflections, or facilitate, by familiar phrases, a practical acquaintance with the verbs and the most useful words among the other parts of speech. If the vocabulary of a living language were put into his hands at the outset, he could not avoid adopting a bad pronunciation, incidental to the rapid and careless manner in which words are usually repeated when being committed to memory. It would also be injudicious early to burthen memory with a large collection of nouns, when these cannot as yet be applied in conversation or composition; for they are not more useful in the preliminary speaking or writing exercises than as a preparation for reading. A beginner cannot foresee what will be the subjects of his first conversations or compositions; he must therefore be at a loss to know to which out of the immense number of nouns he should give the preference. If, on the other hand, to be prepared for every topic of conversation he wishes to lay in a large stock, he will find it a troublesome task to commit many to memory; because the detached words of a vocabulary do not form in the mind that chain of necessary association by which ideas recall each other; and being learned before the student is sufficiently advanced to employ them in conversation or composition, they are soon forgotten. Words are remembered not so much by being well learned at any one time as by being occasionally heard, read, and used in the expression of thought, as occurs in acquiring the native tongue by the iterating process of nature.

Learning the words of a vocabulary, as a means of improving the memory, is also objectionable, for it does not exercise it in a

* Lemare's *Cours de Langue Latine* presents a large number of classical phrases which illustrate the inflections and grammatical concord of substantives, adjectives, and verbs. This work, remarkable for the variety and justness of its applications cannot be too much recommended to the attention of teachers and adult learners.

useful manner. The cultivation of a faculty in a particular direction does not extend its power in another: thus if the sense of taste be exercised in distinguishing different kinds of tea, it will not discriminate better between one kind of wine and another, and *vice versâ;* if the sight be exercised on colours, it will not appreciate forms or distances the better; and if exercised on either forms or distances, similar partial exclusiveness of improvement will be produced. So it is with the intellectual faculties, their development is always in accordance with the means by which it is attained: the person who has been much engaged in learning mere words will not, from that special exercise, acquire greater power in recollecting facts, localities, dates, the elements of a professional pursuit, the subject-matter of a book or of a spoken discourse. In short, the practice of committing to memory detached words and phrases gives to this faculty nothing more than an aptitude for parroting another man's words and phrases, and such an aptitude will never raise its possessor in the scale of intellect, or enable him to carry on more successfully the affairs of life.

"Is not," says Degérando, "the nomenclature of a language taught as a preparatory exercise, whatever care may be taken, most uninteresting, and hence most prejudicial to the first stage of the study? when it is so important to make this first stage easy and agreeable. Can the pupil find any great attraction in the study of unconnected words, the use of which he does not yet see, and which are only a heap of lumber accumulated before him? What pleasure could we ourselves find in reading the pages of a dictionary, if we were condemned to such a task?"*

In the hands of a teacher a vocabulary may become a useful auxiliary; he should have recourse to it according to the wants of his pupils, and draw from its stores the various elements of the phraseology on which he desires to exercise them. Knowing himself the use and value of these elements, he may easily fix their particular sense by the context in which he introduces them. If an instructor knew how to diversify that context, he could enable learners to determine exactly the signification of words, in the same way as is done in acquiring the native tongue.

However, the facility with which, in most instances, we dispense with substantives, and especially with the names of sensible

* *De l'Education des Sourds-muets.*

objects, precludes the necessity of studying them at the commencement, when young persons may be more usefully engaged in learning words more immediately required. The things which concrete substantives represent can often, when alluded to in conversation, be pointed at, described, or explained by signs: so in the native tongue it frequently happens that we speak of things, the names of which we know not or have forgotten. But the properties and qualities expressed by abstract substantives and adjectives, the modifications of ideas indicated by determinatives, and by moods, tenses, and persons of verbs, as well as the relations and circumstances of time, place, quantity, manner, and comparison, expressed by prepositions, conjunctions, and adverbs, could not well be conveyed by gestures, looks, and tones; an early knowledge of the words and inflections significant of the most familiar among such notions is therefore indispensable.

At a later period, when the learner has acquired command of the verbs and the secondary words, committing to memory a vocabulary of substantives, adjectives, and verbs may prove an interesting and beneficial exercise; because he then can apply these words as he learns them. Useless as they are to a beginner, they become indispensable to a person who has gained some proficiency in speaking, and who, in proportion to his knowledge of them, can extend his sphere of conversation. Being learned at the same time as practice elicits their usefulness, they will be more eagerly studied, more easily retained, and more properly applied.

If the student undertakes the learning of a vocabulary when he has made some progress in reading, the task will present no great difficulty; for in the course of his practice the most useful substantives, adjectives, and verbs must have repeatedly occurred in circumstances which have fully explained their different acceptations. Their subsequent employment in the formation of sentences will not only be the best mode of impressing them on the memory, but will also be the most gratifying reward for the labour of learning them.

SECT. IV. OF THE COMPOSITION OF A VOCABULARY.

That a vocabulary may serve all the purposes for which it is intended, not only should it contain the words most useful, and in the order in which they are required at the successive stages of the practice in speaking and writing, but these words should be so classified, that the learning of them and their introduction into sentences may be assisted by the very classification.

The words of the second class, as the most useful at the outset, should have precedence. They should be arranged in various series, according to the manner in which they are used: 1. Those which, in discourse, combine with substantives,—*articles* and *all determinatives*, *prepositions*, *adverbs of quantity*, and *numerals*. 2. Those which come before adjectives,—*adverbs of comparison*. 3. Those which associate with verbs,—*pronouns*, *adverbs*, and *conjunctions*.

Substantives, adjectives, and verbs, should be classified with reference to the commonness of their prefixes and affixes, the similarity of the phraseology into which they enter, and the sameness of the grammatical rules which they illustrate. The mind would then readily apprehend the import of the forms which these words assume, and would perceive the relations by which they are connected in a proposition; greater number of ideas might also, by this means, be presented to the learner, without imposing a heavier burthen on his memory; because we more easily recollect similar than dissimilar objects.

Collections of words and phrases in two languages should exhibit, by juxtaposition, the manner and the instances in which they resemble or differ; they should, in fact, illustrate the etymology, construction, and genius of each. It is especially when the foreign language bears affinity to the native, as its primitive or derivative, that such a parallel would prove effective in supplying learners with an extensive range of words. Comparison between the two languages is the groundwork on which the study is based: this point should not, therefore, be neglected in the composition of elementary books. If the words and phrases exemplify, in systematic order, the rules of grammar, and particularly the differences between the two languages, the application of them to phraseology, as will afterwards be

explained, will accustom learners to speak the foreign language both grammatically and idiomatically.

Words which are alike, or nearly so, in sound, but different in spelling and meaning, as also those which are similar in orthography, although they differ in pronunciation, equally demand a place in a vocabulary intended for learners. The first kind—the homonyms—will enable students to overcome difficulties in spelling; and the second—the homographs—will exhibit the differences of meaning and pronunciation in words apparently the same.

The generality of vocabularies composed for the teaching of living languages are deficient in all these respects; they do not even contain the words most required, either for understanding a foreign author, or for speaking the language; they, for the most part, consist only of names of material objects, terms little used in general conversation. Verbs and adjectives, although rarely admitted into such books, claim a place in them, as indispensable elements of discourse.

With regard to substantives, preference should be given to those which are denominated abstract, because such are not, like concrete nouns, confined to particular topics of conversation; and they possess a great advantage,—a knowledge of them leads to rapid acquaintance with the corresponding verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, through their etymological affinity. Such words, for example, as *ear* and *nose*, *shirt* and *shoe*, *shovel* and *fender*, which are found in the generality of vocabularies, seldom occur in standard works, or in conversing with strangers; whereas words like *facilité* (ease), *soin* (care), *crainte* (fear), *raison* (reason), &c., not only may be introduced in any discourse and on any occasion, but they lead to a knowledge of the kindred words, *faciliter*, *facile*, *facilement*; *soigner*, *soigneux*, *soigneusement*; *craindre*, *craintif*, *craintivement*; *raisonner*, *raisonnement*, *raisonnable*, *raisonnablement*, *déraisonner*, &c.

Some persons, Cobbett among them, have recommended the learning of a dictionary as an introduction to the study of a language. This species of vocabulary is the most objectionable, because the principle of accidental contiguity which brings these words together, is not only most uninteresting, but most unfavourable to the exercise of comparison, analogy, or association of ideas, and, consequently, places the objects of study beyond the reach of intellectual memory. The alphabetical classification of words, used as a mnemonic means of learning a language,

is about as absurd as would be an arrangement of minerals according to the alphabetical order of their names, as an introduction to the study of mineralogy.

SECT. V.—SYNONYMY.

To attain proficiency in a foreign language, a learner must not be satisfied with possessing a large supply of words; he must also, if he aims at perspicuity and precision, be able to select the one proper for every shade of idea. This ability, an essential element of good style, marks a high degree of excellence in the expression of thought.

There is, in every language, a considerable number of words called *synonyms*, which, in their general sense, may be used one for the other, although differing by delicate shades of meaning which modify that general sense. These delicate shades should be well discriminated, as on them the clearness and force of the ideas depend. It is not by the number of words that we should estimate the copiousness of a language, but by the variety and distinctness of the ideas which they express. This is a chief merit of the French, which is clear and expressive, although it may be inferior in the number of words to some other languages.

Verbal superfluities abound in Italian, and more particularly in English. Independently of numerous words admitting of a double form, such as *competence* and *competency*, *credulity* and *credulousness*, *dependance* and *dependence*, *visitor* and *visiter*, *honour* and *honor*, *classic* and *classical*, *soldierly* and *soldierlike*, *delusive* and *delusory*, *sulphurous* and *sulphureous*, *awaked* and *awoke*, *bitten* and *bit*, *though* and *although*, *till* and *until*, *inward* and *inwards*, *while* and *whilst*, and thousands similar, the English language being a compound of Saxon, Latin, and French, contains a great number of duplicate terms for the same ideas, as *to begin* and *to commence*, *freedom* and *liberty*, *swiftness* and *velocity*, *whim* and *caprice*, *fearful* and *timid*, *fatherly* and *paternal*, *unavoidable* and *inevitable*, *talkative* and *loquacious*, &c. In many instances, however, there is a marked difference between the northern and the southern derivatives, which imparts to the language great power, richness, and variety of diction. Good writers do not employ them indiscriminately; but style, rather than meaning, influences their choice. The

best critics in the language prefer the words of Saxon origin, as more racy and more genuine English than those of either Latin or French derivation, which predominate in the language of polite life. They are, for the great mass of the people, more effectively significant than the words of classic origin, and appeal more forcibly to their common sympathies. When to employ with propriety either the Saxon or the classical elements, and which to select,—the more energetic or the more refined expression,—are, even to the well-informed English, constant sources of perplexity. Shakspeare is particularly happy in discriminating between these derivatives.

If all writers and speakers would agree to prefer one or the other of these forms, the English language would then assume a national character of which it is now destitute; for, in this, as in matter of fashion, fickleness and inconsistency lead the English, despite their national pride, to an over-indulgence in foreign expressions, thus wantonly and wrongfully proclaiming poverty in their own idiom.

The French go to another extreme: they seldom borrow words from other languages; but those which they do borrow they properly bring within the scope of their own pronunciation and orthography. It would not be amiss if they adopted foreign words more than they do. "Our language," says Voltaire, "is a proud beggar; it must have alms forced upon it."

The intermixture of French words and phrases, frequent in fashionable conversations and in many literary productions of this country, is ridiculous; it is, in most instances, the effect of vanity. Why should an Englishman resort to such words as, *chef-d'œuvre*, *penchant*, *mauvaise-honte*, *bizarre*, *coup-d'œil*, *en passant*, &c., the use of which is rendered still more ridiculous by an awkward attempt at their French pronunciation, when he has *master-piece*, *inclination*, *bashfulness*, *whimsical*, *sight*, *glance*, or *view*, *passingly* or *in passing*, &c., words equally expressive, and the pronunciation of which is familiar to all? The same observation applies to the practice of introducing in conversation the foreign names of continental places for which there are English names.

Neology, the introduction of new terms, should be grounded on necessity and governed by analogy. Foreign words should be introduced or new ones coined only to abridge discourse or supply deficiency, and when called for by the progress of art or science. French is rich in expressions which have not their

equivalents in other languages: these it would be commendable to borrow; but few of those which the would-be-genteel introduce into English are of this character. "Our language," says Dr. Campbell, "is in greater danger of being overwhelmed by an inundation of foreign words than of any other species of destruction."*

It may be observed, in passing, that the word *Monsieur*, not unfrequently introduced in English writing and conversation, in allusion to French persons, offers another instance of this mania for foreign expressions. We cannot understand why its English equivalents, *Mr.* and *Sir*, should not be applied to a Frenchman as well as to an Englishman. That a tight-rope dancer should, in the announcement of his performance, place that outlandish qualification before his name, as a bait to allure the public, always desirous of novelty, is consistent with his object; but unnecessarily to incur the double ridicule arising from misapplying and mispronouncing that French word is very absurd; and the more so, as the corresponding terms in other languages are not applied to the foreigners to whom they respectively belong, although consistency would require the practice to be general. This, however, being impracticable, there is no rational course left but to translate the word *Monsieur*, when speaking English.

Predilection for this species of barbarism is not confined to fashionable persons and novel writers; it prevails even among the learned, who frequently introduce in English an orthography inconsistent with its genius: they, for example, write with their original spelling the foreign words, *formula, archæology, epocha, rhythmus, arbutus, eulogium, perigeum, animalcula, basso-relievo, renegado*, &c., in preference to *formule, archeology, epoch, rhythm, arbute, eulogy, perigee, animalcules, bas-relief, renegade*, &c., used by less assuming persons. But, not only do these learned persons preserve the terminations of many Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and other foreign words, they also insist on forming the plural of some of them, such as *medium, memorandum, encomium, appendix, dogma, automaton, cherub, seraph, virtuoso, conversazione*, &c., as in the languages from which they are taken; thus, *media, memoranda, encomia, appendices, dogmata, automata, cherubim, seraphim, virtuosi, conversazioni*, &c.; whilst other persons, with perhaps less erudition, but with certainly more good sense, conform to English analogy in the plural of these words, which

* *Philosophy of Rhetoric.*

they form thus, *mediums, memorandums, encomiums, appendixes, dogmas, automatons, cherubs, seraphs, virtuosos, conversaziones,* &c. Hence arises a new series of duplicate terms, and, with them, numberless irregularities and difficulties. It is related of the celebrated scholar, Lord Avonmore, that, in an examination before a Committee of the Irish House of Commons, upon a subject connected with the University of Dublin, having frequently used the word "*testimoniums*," Mr. Plunkett, who was the examining counsel, asked if his Lordship had any objection to the word being taken down by the clerk as "*testimonia*." "None whatever, Sir," was the answer, "provided '*testimonia*' can be considered better English."

Affectation corrupts a language as much as ignorance. It is to be lamented, that persons, who, by their influential position in society and literature, have it in their power to set an example of order and harmony in the language, are precisely those who affect to disregard its analogy and who alter its genius by the introduction of barbarisms and solecisms. They justify, in some degree, these words of Shakespeare :—

> "proud Italy,
> Whose manners still our tardy apish nation
> Limps after in base awkward imitation." *

In some languages, objects, attributes, states, or actions, susceptible of being viewed in different lights, admit of only one general mode of expression, whilst, in others, every particular shade of idea has a sign to represent it. Laplanders designate the rein-deer by twenty-eight different terms, referring either to the age, colour, or various properties of this valuable animal. In the language of Tahiti there are upwards of twenty names for the bread-fruit in its various states of preservation. In Javanese, according to Crawfurd, there are twenty-one distinct expressions to indicate as many different modes of sitting down ; and fifty-four names for as many varieties of the cutlass.† Arabic is, perhaps, in this respect, the most copious ; its fertility in synonyms is extraordinary : a sword, a serpent, a camel, a lion, a palm-tree, a date, and many other objects familiar in Arabia, have, each, several hundred names in that language. The Arabs proverbially say it can be known completely only by miracle. According to Chardin, it contains upwards of 12,000,000 of words ;‡ and, after allowing for a traveller's privileged exagge-

* Shakespeare, *Richard II.*

† *History of the Indian Archipelago.* ‡ *Voyage en Perse.*

ration, there will still remain enough to establish the extreme copiousness of this language.

True synonyms,—that is, words of identical signification, and which can always be substituted one for the other,—are rare in most languages, and present little to interest; they serve only to avoid repetitions and disagreeable sounds. But the number is very large of words which, differing in their proper sense, become really synonymous when used figuratively: for example, *iron* and *chain* differ essentially in their proper sense, but they become synonymous when the word *iron* is taken figuratively, as, *he is* in irons; that is, *in chains.*

The largest class of words to which this denomination has been given comprises those which, although bearing one general idea in common, could not with propriety be always taken one for the other: they are synonymous in their general, not in their particular sense. The avowed purport of treatises on synonyms is to explain the distinctions between them, that is, to desynonymise them, as Coleridge expresses it. Many circumstances concur to increase their number; among others, the blending of different dialects into one language, the variety of etymological sources, and the ignorance of the greater portion of a nation, who constantly use one word for another, and, thus, gradually assimilate those which were originally of different import. The light shades which distinguish these supposed synonyms being, in most cases, only species of the same generic idea, are easily confounded in that one idea by the generality of speakers and writers, who are apt to neglect slight differences of meaning to avoid the repetition of words and produce euphony.

He who wishes to speak correctly and perspicuously must learn to discriminate between approximate terms: their different shades of signification, when well understood, contribute to the wealth of a language. In the choice of words we should be guided not so much by euphony, as by the particular sense they bear as proper or figurative, by the etymology which exhibits their primitive acceptations, and the terminations which often modify their meaning. If tried by the test of appropriate examples, synonyms will generally be found not to stand as perfect equivalents one for the other. But a knowledge of the distinctions which mark these words will be best gained by exact definition, and, like an acquaintance with words having different significations, will be effectually obtained by diligent and careful

study of the best writers. In fact, all the great masters of style in every tongue bestow much care in discriminating between the words they use: hence their works afford continual lessons in this respect.

The precise meaning of words should be carefully ascertained; for it is impossible to speak or write with propriety, or even to appreciate fully the merit of literary composition, without a practical knowledge of verbal distinctions. The intellectual progress which society is daily making renders attention to synonymy the more desirable, because the growing complication of ideas increases the danger of confusion. Works explanatory of the distinctions between imperfect synonyms should be consulted by those who wish to know a language thoroughly.*

The study of synonymy exercises sagacity in distinguishing things easily confounded. By enabling us to determine the precise meaning of terms, it prevents disputes on words which mostly arise from their ambiguity; it establishes the right usage through the help of etymological and logical analysis; it imparts to style propriety, perspicuity, and accuracy of expression, which are the characteristics of good writing; it restores to the various words of one family their proper features and original character; finally, it enriches language, by distinguishing different ideas expressed by words which are but too often considered as of the same significance. It is not the repetition of the same sound so much as that of the same idea which fatigues a reader; the mind is sooner tired than the ear: this is proved by those secondary words, the articles, prepositions, and conjunctions, the continual recurrence of which is scarcely noticed in the succession of the diversified ideas in whose train they come. Richness and beauty of composition result more from variety of thought than of sound, and nothing contributes so much to produce these qualities as the study of synonyms.

* The best works on this subject are, in English, W. Taylor's *English Synonyms Discriminated*, G. Crabb's *English Synonyms Explained*, and, superior to either, *A Selection of English Synonyms*, edited by Archbishop Whately; in French, F. Guizot's *Nouveau Dictionnaire Universel des Synonymes de la Langue Française*; and, in German, J. Aug. Eberhard's *Critical Dictionary of German Synonyms*, preceded by an *Essay on the Theory of German Synonymy*.

SECT. VI.—FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS.

In every language many words have various acceptations, one of which is the primitive or proper, all the others are figurative. It is as indispensable to know the different senses in which the same word may be taken, as to know the differences of meaning which distinguish words apparently synonymous.

The aptitude of man to seize the countless analogies which exist between all the operations of nature, early induced him to attach to the words already in use for expressing sensible things such metaphysical ideas as bore some affinity or resemblance to their primitive signification. To this mode of expression he was also led by the necessity of avoiding a multiplicity of signs, and by the facility thus afforded of characterising spiritual notions, the essence of which is often vague and obscure. Figures of speech, like the modulations of the voice and the other signs of the language of action, are the more resorted to in proportion as the conventional signs are the more imperfect: hence the natural tendency to imagery in the infancy of society. Eastern idioms, spoken by nations not far advanced in civilisation, are remarkable in this respect; they are poor in words, but rich in figures. Hebrew, in particular, possesses this double character, which accounts for the metaphorical style of our sacred books. Such is also the case with some European dialects now little cultivated; among others the Irish, which abounds in metaphors. The American Indians exhibit in their unpolished idioms other striking examples of this fact; all their treaties and public acts are filled with images the most hyperbolical. If we consider this tendency in reference to individuals, we shall see that uneducated people are more prone to figurative language than their superiors in literary attainments; for ignorance of words has, in the expression of thought, the same effect as poverty of language. "I am persuaded," says Dumarsais, "that there is more figurative language employed on a market day than in academic assemblies for several days together."* Miss Edgeworth, in her "Essay on Irish Bulls," has forcibly illustrated the same truth.

The vivid and picturesque manner of expressing thoughts by figures has been adopted not only to supply the deficiencies of

* *Traité des Tropes.*

language, but also to bring the senses in aid of the mind, by presenting abstractions under the images of physical facts. All metaphysical terms may be ascribed to this source: they arise from the analogies existing between the moral and the physical world. The representation of immaterial things by signs expressive of material ones is a homage which the intellect has at all times paid to the senses. In the pictorial writing of primitive societies, metaphysical ideas were represented by sensible symbols; and in the present day almost every expression is figurative which relates to moral and intellectual subjects. However, the peculiar nature of such expressions is not always obvious, because their figurative sense has in the course of time become proper from the close and habitual association of the ideas with the words: thus the metaphorical dress of language gradually disappears.

Figures originate also from the power of association, which readily recalls to the imagination immediate relations and contiguous ideas; hence we often take one for the other, the cause and the effect, the whole and its parts, the principal and the accessories, the genus and the species, the sign and the thing signified, the container and the thing contained, the object and the substance of which it is made, &c. Every part of speech can be used one for another, the singular for the plural, the present tense of a verb for the past or future, and *vice versâ*. The diversities of relation expressed by the same preposition is another effect of this tendency to speak figuratively. There is not perhaps a word that could not be taken in a figurative sense.

Besides these figures of words, or tropes as they are called, which consist of words used in a sense different from their primitive meaning, there are also figures of thoughts. These consist of ideas which, under the influence of various emotions or states of the mind, assume peculiar forms of expression, such as the comparison, the interrogation, the apostrophe, the personification, the allegory, and all metaphors the words of which are used in their original signification. The particular terms which constitute figures of words are essential to their existence, and cannot be changed without the figures being destroyed; whereas figures of thoughts consist exclusively in the ideas, and are independent of the words by which they are expressed. Figures of words are peculiar to the language in which they are found, and numerous in proportion to its poverty; they enter in every style, even the most trivial, and are more extensively

used than proper terms; figures of thoughts, which suit best the elevated styles of poetry and oratory, are common to all languages, and can generally be translated, being independent of the words by which they are expressed. Tropes, on the contrary, cannot always be translated, because nations under the influence of different circumstances often attach to corresponding words peculiar figurative meanings; frequently also words in one language have not corresponding terms in another.

Not only are figures of words and all deviations from the primitive meanings of terms extremely numerous in every language, but the import and application of those which apparently correspond in any two idioms often materially differ. For example, the word *passion*, which expresses in English and in French the same generic idea, has in each language a specific signification very different; when used figuratively, it more usually means in English *anger*, and in French *love*. The word *figure* applies metaphorically to the human frame both in English and in French; but in the former language it means the *whole person*, and is rendered in French by *taille*, and in the latter it signifies *the face*. The figurative meaning of the verb *to abuse* is *to insult* (in French *injurier*), that of the corresponding French *abuser* is *to deceive*. The French *un pied* de céleri (literally a *foot* of celery), is rendered in English by *a head* of celery. There is, besides, a large number of expressions used figuratively in one language and not in the other: for example, *to err*, *assault*, *young person*, *instantly*, never lose their proper sense, whilst the corresponding French words have always a figurative sense, *errer* (to wander), *assaut* (fencing match, storming of a town), *jeune personne* (young lady), *instamment* (with entreaty). The adjective *respectable*, which in French always means *deserving respect*, is usually applied in English to a rich or well-dressed person, and to a well-looking object,—*a respectable house*, *a respectable dress*, are very general expressions; their literal translation into any language would be ludicrous; the French verb *valoir* always preserves its proper sense, *equivalent to*, while its correspondent, *to be worth*, is used figuratively in the sense of *to possess*, and perversely implies that a man's worth is estimated by the amount of his money. It also frequently happens that an image, which in one language is consistent with good taste, would in another be considered trivial or ridiculous. In fact, the differences between the figurative meanings of apparently corresponding words in any two idioms are innumerable; and

although they may, in many instances, be divined from the context when read or heard, they lead translators into frequent mistakes. It is, above all, when speaking or writing a foreign language that these differences present difficulty to a person who has not acquired it by familiar intercourse with the people, or incessant application to their books.

Each species of figure has obtained a particular name, which may be known by consulting treatises of rhetoric, and to which we refer the advanced student; but, although acquaintance with these names is sometimes useful, we do not think it indispensable. The right application of the figures themselves to different kinds of composition, and an acquaintance with the idiomatic sense of words, are the objects which demand the most serious attention. They will be secured by a critical analysis of the best writers, combined with diligent study of standard works on belles-lettres, and especially by mixing habitually with the well educated.

As due regard to the synonymy of words contributes to perspicuity and justness of expression, so the judicious application of figures imparts force, elegance, and consistency to style. Figurative forms enrich language by multiplying the signification of words; animate style by adorning it with allusions to the active scenes of nature; assist the judgment by embodying abstract notions in sensible images; and delight the imagination by offering to it endless means of exercise.

We will now examine in succession how the four branches can be most successfully and speedily attained.

BOOK VIII.

FIRST BRANCH—READING.

"Via opus est incipientibus sed ea plana, et cum ad ingrediendum tum ad demonstrandum expedita. –QUINTILIAN." *

"Lire, lire, et toujours lire en la langue étrangère est le moyen par excellence."—AJASSON DE GRANSAGNE.†

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY BOOKS.

SECT. I.—ENDS TO BE ATTAINED IN READING THE FOREIGN AUTHORS.

To reading has been assigned the first place in the study of a foreign language, because it is the easiest of the four branches, the most important as an ultimate object, and the most useful as a means by which to arrive at the other branches of a language learned out of the country in which it is spoken.

Easy, however, as this acquisition may be, time and labour have often been wasted in the pursuit from not knowing how to proceed. In order then that the student may advance rapidly in this art, we will point out what we conceive to be his proper course; and in doing so shall apply our observations both to the dead and to the living languages, because, although the study of the latter presents a larger field of usefulness, it is on a par with that of the former when reading and writing are the objects proposed.

* "Young beginners require to be put on the road, and that road to be made smooth and easy."—*Inst. Orat.*, Lib. 8, Proem.

† *Art d' Etudier.*

The three ends which are to be attained by the study of the first branch are, 1. *Perfect understanding of the written languages;* 2. *Critical appreciation of the beauties in literary productions;* 3. *Acquisition of materials for speaking and writing.* Through the exercises required for accomplishing these three ultimate objects will be obtained the incidental benefits, *mental discipline* and *improvement in the native tongue.* The acquisition of the knowledge conveyed by books, although the most important department of reading, is only a consequence of the possession of that art, and cannot be made one of the subdivisions of the study of language.

To attain these ends three things must be successively attended to, *words*, *style*, and *subject.* A learner's first aim should be to gain that familiarity with words in their different acceptations, without which neither style nor subject could be studied. The initiatory books, which we have called *reading vocabularies*, from the peculiar office which they are intended to fulfil, should exclusively engross his attention during the first stage of the study. A few elementary volumes of this sort could not, it is true, bring under his notice all the materials of expression which constitute the verbal elements of a language; but, by making him acquainted with the most familiar portion of the foreign vocabulary, they will lay the foundation for studies of a higher character. His knowledge of words will continue to increase through the course, and will be commensurate with the extent of his reading.

The second object,—gaining acquaintance with the style,—will at a more advanced stage present no difficulty, and will be effected by comparing the constructions of the native and the foreign language, investigating the propriety, synonymy, and euphony of words, and analysing the phraseology on grammatical, logical, and rhetorical principles, as illustrated in standard authors.

At a still later period the third object will be attended to. When the learner has overcome the difficulties of the language by the reading of several volumes in different styles, he may attack those of the subject. Thoughts may be investigated and information acquired through the study of didactic works; the sentiments, opinions, statements, and arguments of their authors should be examined as regards morality and truth, so as to guard the young reader from error, and store his mind with none but sound knowledge.

SECT. II.—OF THE FIRST BOOKS TO BE READ.

At the outset the learner must not be diverted from the preparatory exercise on words by untimely attempts at analysing the structure of the foreign language, or acquiring information through it. Postponing these objects is the most certain way of securing them. The necessity thus imposed on beginners of at first neglecting the two points most valuable in literary compositions, renders it worse than useless to put into their hands works distinguished for elegance of style or usefulness of contents. It is enough that they strictly conform to the grammar and genius of the language in which they are written.

When Latin is the language to be learned, it matters little if the style of the first books is not of the Augustan age; for the learner, intent on seizing the sense of the words, bestows little attention on the phraseology, and consequently retains no unfavourable impression from it. He principally requires to translate somewhat rapidly, that he may become acquainted with a large number of words, and that, by meeting the same repeatedly in different circumstances, he may be familiarised with their various inflections and their different acceptations. This early familiarity with an inferior style will not in the least interfere with his future study of one more classical. Montaigne, as was before stated, acquired Latin from hearing it spoken even by his domestic attendants, who must have familiarised him with a style not the purest, which nevertheless did not prevent his being one of the first scholars of his age. The same may be said of learned Latinists at the revival of letters, and of many linguists and literary men of modern times, who have reached the highest eminence in foreign literature through the ordeal of familiar conversation in childhood. The same happens in the native tongue; the trivial language of the first periods of life has no pernicious influence on the subsequent acquisition of elevated expressions. "All studies have their infancy," observes Quintilian, "and the most distinguished orators have commenced with the most homely prattle."*

We insist on this point, because the prevalent method, which is founded on the notion that none but works written in the most elegant or classical style ought to be in the hands of be-

* *Instit. Orat.*, B. I., C. I.

ginners, creates the necessity of resorting to various preparatory exercises, and is in opposition to the principle of gradation prescribed by nature : it is one of the chief causes both of the discouragement experienced by learners at their entrance upon the study of foreign languages, and of the unreasonable duration of classical studies.

The labour imposed on the learner must always be proportioned to his strength, and the assistance afforded him adapted to his wants. Judicious gradation should be observed in the selection of books, from the familiar to the abstruse, from the simple to the intricate in style, from prose to poetry. For beginners they should be such as to excite curiosity by variety, encourage diligence by facility, and reward application by pleasure and utility.

The first book should be composed of small detached narratives, each an anecdote or historical fact, complete in itself, in style simple and correct, and sufficiently interesting to stimulate the learner to exertion. "An easy book," says Dr. Stirling, "rendered still easier, especially to children, can never be found fault with on that account, except by those who envy youth such advantages, and would needs have them trace the same rough, tedious, and intricate path of grammatical learning which themselves have heavily trod."*

Wanostrocht undoubtedly had these objects in view in compiling his "Recueil Choisi ;" but the selection is not always judicious or appropriate ; we should wish to see in it fewer Chinese and more French historical names. The explanations given in this introductory book are insufficient, not literal enough, and in many instances very incorrect.

Perrin's "Fables," although one of the oldest works of this kind, is as yet one of the best. Its explanations, however, have the same defects as those of the above-named volume ; its subjects are too childish for the generality of learners, and its morality is not always irreproachable.

Porquet's "First French and Italian Reading Books," different from his other compilations, may be useful to beginners ; but their explanations also demand revision and correction.

Merlet's "Traducteur Français," intended for the same use, is not without merit, but is too sparing of interpretations. Most of the extracts of which it is composed are not appropriate to young people, nor is the selection judicious, consisting as

* Preface to *Eutropius*.

it does of abridgments of works which should be read entire. Collections of miscellaneous extracts from different authors are in general uninteresting and unsuitable to beginners. We will, in the next chapter, speak more fully of this scrap-reading system.

The absence of good elementary works, with such explanations as would enable beginners to dispense with the dictionary, causes great delay in the acquisition of the art of reading foreign languages, and deters many from linguistic studies.

Classical instruction is, in this country, particularly deficient in initiatory books for learners under twelve or thirteen years of age: the collections of phraseological fragments usually resorted to, such as Swain's "Sentences," Valpy's "Delectus," Ballantyne's "Introduction to Latin Reading," and Cook's "Analysis," a work much used in Ireland, are little calculated to create interest or stimulate the energy of learners; they do not contain a single phrase which would excite a desire to know the next. The detached scraps of which they are composed are too dry, incomplete, and unconnected to command attention, or please the imagination; while the language in which they are clothed, being, for the most part, taken from the standard writers, is too difficult to incite beginners by the pleasure of success. So that, proceeding very slowly, and not meeting the same words frequently, they forget as they advance through the book. Nearly a year is thus consumed in translating one of these elementary volumes, and gaining an acquaintance with but very scanty phraseology, — poor preparation, indeed, for entering upon the reading of the classics!

These books lead learners by a very circuitous way to the Latin classics: their avowed purpose is to assist in learning the Latin grammar, which is itself an introduction to the writing of Latin exercises, and these exercises are usually considered as a preparation for the reading of the higher classics. How very tedious is this mode of proceeding! Can we wonder that it produces in the learners, as a first impression, a dislike which commonly accompanies them through their studies. Surely it would be far shorter and safer, as well as more rational, to follow the course of nature,—first familiarising them with the simple language of easy and interesting books, and then leading them, through a succession of volumes introduced in a gradually ascending series, from easy and interesting narratives to the productions of the great poets, orators, and historians.

Among the elementary Latin works which may be put in the

hands of beginners, we will mention, in the order in which they may be introduced, L'Homond's "Epitome Historiæ Sacræ," Siret's "Epitome Historiæ Græcæ," Jouvence's "Epitome de Diis et Heroïbus Poeticis," "Selectæ e Veteri Testamento Historiæ," L'Homond's "De Viris Illustribus Urbis Romæ," "Selectæ e profanis Scriptoribus Historiæ," which are used with great success on the continent. These few initiatory volumes, or others of the same sort, which might be easily composed, would, by gentle ascent, lead to the easiest classics, and, from these, to the standard writers, in less time, with less annoyance, and with more certainty, than grammatical rules, collections of phrases, and written exercises, placed at the entrance of the study seemingly to deter from, rather than invite to, ancient literature.

SECT. III.—FACILITIES SHOULD BE AFFORDED TO BEGINNERS.

There are difficulties incident to all study; an accumulation of them must be carefully avoided at every period, especially in the commencement. Plato and Locke are, with Quintilian, among the many who recommend us to facilitate the first steps of study. "The great use and skill of a teacher," says Locke, "is to make all as easy as he can." * It is undoubtedly part of his duty to save his pupils waste of time and labour. The more rapidly one language is learned, the more languages, the more sciences and arts, may be studied within the period of scholastic education. Let beginners then be afforded every assistance which it is in the power of books and masters to afford. Learned professors have no objection to consult notes, glossaries, commentaries, and translations, when a Greek or a Latin passage perplexes them; they even interline native classics to assist their memory; they should not deny to their pupils the aid required by them. No unnecessary obstacles should be permitted to discourage them at their entrance upon the study. Rendering the acquisition of a language tedious and hateful cannot make it better known and more likely to be used afterwards.

Convinced that the easiest mode of obtaining instruction is not always the best, or the most favourable to intellectual development, we shall subsequently suggest modes of great mental exertion. But, in translating the first volumes, the difficulties of apprehending and remembering the signification of

* *Thoughts on Education.*

many new words, of construing them into intelligible sentences, and rendering them into correct native expressions, are quite sufficient to engross the beginner's attention, exercise his judgment, and bring out his reflective powers; he should be spared the irksome work of looking for these words in a lexicon, selecting one of their many equivalents, and consulting a grammar respecting their inflections, their concord, their place, or the irregularities which may affect them. All this mental labour should be reserved for a more advanced stage in the study.

The art of reading, being the means by which several of the objects proposed from the study of language may be accomplished, cannot be facilitated too much, or be possessed too soon. It should, therefore, be acquired in the most expeditious manner which can be devised. The separate consideration of the different objects of reading and the gradation of difficulties which we prescribe, must contribute to the attainment of this end. Division of labour is a principle essential to success in every species of human industry: in the instruction of the young, it consists in directing their undivided attention to one thing only at a time, and in making them pass from the simple to the complex.

Acquaintance with the foreign words should be the primary object of the learner. He should be afforded every facility for ascertaining their exact value in a ready and easy manner. To this effect the text of the first book which he translates should be accompanied by faithful interpretations of the words and clear explanations of the idioms. The study, as before recommended, of the declensions, conjugations, and the words of the Second Class, conjointly with translations, would smooth his way, by exhibiting at once the relations between the words of the First Class. But, as the ability to comprehend a language could not be gained through the knowledge of grammatical definitions or syntactical rules, these should be dispensed with as a preparation for translation.

The dictionary should not be introduced at this early period, especially in the case of young learners, who are very awkward at using it. Even in the hands of adults, recourse to such a book consumes considerable time in the beginning, when they have to look for nearly every word of the foreign author, and to choose one of the various native equivalents it offers to them—an operation extremely difficult at the beginning of a sentence, because the particular acceptation of a word, depending on the

context, cannot be determined when the remainder of that sentence is as yet unknown. The search for single words often requires more time than would the reading of whole sentences by means of a verbal translation accompanying the text; and the slowness with which their meanings reach the mind not only renders it difficult to seize their collective sense, but the process is so little calculated to fix them on the memory, that the learner not unfrequently has forgotten the first words of a sentence before he has arrived at the last, and must go through the annoying and laborious task of searching for them a second time. This and other objections to the use of dictionaries will be more fully adverted to in the next chapter; for the present, it may suffice to observe, that the unseasonable applications to a dictionary impose unnecessary labour, which causes much delay and tends to discourage learners. To its use may be partly attributed the slow progress which boys make in classical learning. They must, indeed, find it difficult to attain proficiency in an art the acquisition of which demands, at least, the reading of twenty-five volumes, when, by the lexicon process, they translate but twenty or thirty lines a day.

Should a beginner have the advantage of a great portion of his teacher's time and attention; should his instruction, for instance, be carried on by a parent or a resident tutor, he should be encouraged to inquire for the meaning of every foreign word which presents difficulty, and to ask explanation of the sentences which he does not perfectly understand. If his age has not yet permitted him to master an extensive stock of native words, he should be told the meaning of the new ones which he has occasion to use in his translation. He should, in fact, be assisted in understanding the native as well as the foreign terms. Whenever practicable, the organs of sense may also be brought in aid of the explanations which he requires. Explaining foreign expressions by the language of action—that is, by directing the perceptive faculties of the child to the objects alluded to in the text—associates in his mind the thing signified with the words of the two languages, and thus prepares him for acquiring the power of thinking in the foreign idiom.

The knowledge of words is in proportion—not, as commonly believed, to the trouble one has had in discovering their meanings—but to the eagerness with which the mind receives them, to the fitness of the time for learning them, to the intensity of attention bestowed on them, to the frequency of their recur-

rence, and to the opportunities one has of using them afterwards. The old adage, "*easily learned soon forgot*," applies to what is learned without sufficient attention, not to what is quickly conceived. When words are acquired at the moment they are wanted, attention is vividly roused, and they remain indelibly engraved on the memory.

So the young child, moved by the simple impulse of nature, arrives, without much trouble, at a knowledge of the words of his own language, and yet retains them with astonishing ease; every gesture, every tone of the voice, every expression of the countenance, assists him in discovering the sense of what he hears. As he advances, he is left to his own resources: we speak before him, not for him, of things but imperfectly intelligible to him; yet he listens with curiosity, and, anxious to discover the subject of our conversation, he depends on the context, when external signs fail him. His first conception of phrases, words, and verbal inflections, may be very imperfect, but the ever-changing circumstances which are connected with them daily supply the deficiencies and bring him nearer to the exact meaning of the expressions. It is thus that, at the entrance upon life, imagination divines the words and imitation soon after reproduces them. Simple and beautiful is the process by which nature initiates children into the language of their parents!

If we contrast in their results the imitative process of nature, which we take for our model, and by which a child ten years old learns without trouble what, in the ordinary circumstances of life, he never will forget, with the lexicon and grammar method, the *slow* process by which boys take seven or eight years to learn a little Latin, which nine-tenths of them forget in half the time, it will show in a striking manner the superiority of the natural method.

SECT. IV.—OF EXPLANATIONS IN INTRODUCTORY BOOKS.

As facilities must be afforded to learners, it is a question of age and of convenience whether they should be given orally or in writing: the first of these two methods suits children better; the second, adults; the first is better calculated for private, and the second, for public instruction. The oral assistance of the teacher, which prevailed in the old school when Europe abounded in Latin scholars more practical than we can now boast of,

although indispensable in the case of very young children, would not always be practicable with older students. These may dispense with a professor, or receive only periodical lessons during which little time is allowed for translation. They must have recourse to books which assist beginners in translation and supply the place of an instructor; for every means should be resorted to, that may save the time and labour required by frequent reference to the dictionary. This latter help may be had recourse to, when, after having gained some proficiency in reading, the learner has few words to look for, and is able to select the most appropriate from the numerous translations attached to the words in a lexicon.

The initiatory books which may best enable a beginner to translate a foreign language in the absence of the teacher, are those in which the text is accompanied by a literal translation, that is, an explanation of the words, placed either, 1, between the lines of the text; 2, in the margin underneath; 3, on the page opposite; or, 4, at the back of the text. Of these different arrangements, the first is the least desirable, because it perplexes the eye and diverts the attention from the text; the others present less temptation to apply unnecessarily to the interpretation; and the last, more especially, provides against the pupils glancing at the explanation, when examined by their teacher. In these books each foreign term should be interpreted by one corresponding in the national language; the place of the words understood should be supplied, and idiomatical forms translated, both literally and freely. The explanations of the first book could not be too minute; but the aid afforded to learners should diminish gradually in the succeeding volumes. For those who have already made some progress, separate annotations might be introduced to explain local customs, peculiar allusions, or other collateral information which may be deemed useful, and sufficiently connected with the subject not to distract the attention. But literal translations, interlineal, marginal, or other, should be used only with a few elementary works,—the standard classics being reserved for a time when learners can construe and translate without such assistance.

The use of these books is in perfect accordance with the natural process by which the infant associates ideas with the first words that he hears in the vernacular tongue. We have already, in Book v. Chap. i., adverted to the similarity of these two modes of proceeding. The native expressions addressed to him

are always accompanied by tones, looks, and gestures, which explain them at once. The translation attached to the text interprets the foreign words at once, as the language of action interprets the native, and ensures the knowledge of them more effectually than the dictionary, because words are better remembered when one appropriate meaning is attached to them, than when the judgment is divided between many different interpretations. By means of these explanations, practice soon associates in the mind of the learner the foreign words with the native, so that a recurrence of the former will readily recall the latter; and thus will the power of comprehending the written language be rapidly acquired. This method has even an advantage over that of nature; for, intelligible as the language of action proves to be to the child, it is evident that it cannot always convey to him the meaning of words, particularly of those which express abstract ideas, or of things not within the power of perception at the time, as precisely and as rapidly as a verbal interpretation accompanying the text does to a person who studies a foreign language. The latter ought, therefore, to be understood by a learner in less time than the native tongue by the child. If the grammar and dictionary method is so deplorably tedious, it is because it is in direct opposition to nature.

In availing himself of the aid afforded by the initiatory books, the learner should not be too hasty in applying to the native words. If he makes use of an interlineal translation, he ought to keep it covered, look at it only after having endeavoured to translate independently of that assistance, and then rest his attention, for a moment, on his new acquisition, to impress it well on his memory. If the same words are, in the explanation, translated differently according to their various acceptations, he will, from the definite meaning they bear in each particular instance, form a clearer conception of their true and varied import, than if he had had recourse to a dictionary; because it is only from the circumstances in which they are applied that he can determine their exact signification. He will also have greater facility for remembering these words; for their association in his mind with the native ones is, by means of their juxta-position, immediate and the more close, as he can have no doubt of the appropriateness of the interpretation in each particular case; the dictionary, on the contrary, by often presenting many translations for a foreign word, keeps him in

doubt as to the proper one, and thus weakens the impression and the association.

When, by means of the explanation affixed to the text, the student is once in possession of all the words of a sentence, he will, in most cases, be able easily to discover the sense conveyed by that sentence. The literal translation used to explain the foreign text, not only will give the meanings of individual words more appropriately than a dictionary, and enable the student to arrive at the sense of his author with less expenditure of time, but will also exhibit, in a striking manner, the points of resemblance and difference between the two languages.

SECT. V.—INTERLINEAL TRANSLATION.—DUMARSAIS' METHOD.

Interlineal translation is not a modern discovery; it was known as far back as the ninth century, as we are informed by Justus Lipsius. Arius Montanus, long since, published the Hebrew Bible with an interlineal version in Latin, which, although rather imperfect, has rendered great service to Hebraic studies. The method of interlineal translation has, for a long time, we believe, been extensively practised in Germany. Locke strongly recommends it as being, in his opinion, the readiest means of initiating a learner into the reading of foreign writers.* After him, this system has been advocated by Dr. Samuel Clarke, Luneau de Boisgermain, Dumarsais, Radonvilliers, the Abbé Gaultier, and many distinguished professors, who have used it, and still use it with success, and who have published works with interlineal versions. Condillac, who, in his education of the Duke of Parma, adopted that method, declares it to be the best for teaching the dead languages.† D'Alembert sanctions it by his entire approbation.‡ It has, of late, in this country, been improperly named after Hamilton, who also proclaimed its efficiency, but long after many writers had done so. Some credit, however, is due to him for his exertion in giving it publicity, and bringing it into operation in Great Britain.

The promoters of the interlineal method do not all agree in the details: some preserve the original text, others alter it in conformity with the genius of the language into which the translation is made; that translation is also more or less literal, according to the particular views of its author. Our limits not

* *Thoughts on Education.* † *Cours d'Etude.* ‡ *Eloge de Dumarsais.*

permitting us to examine these petty differences, we can only state our approbation of the principle; and, although we prefer a verbal interpretation of the foreign text in the margin, or in juxtaposition with that text, we feel persuaded that interlineal translation must, if properly used, assist in speedily making a learner understand the written language. This is the extent of the advantage to be derived from it, whatever may be the boast of some modern professors, who have founded on it systems of instruction by which they pretend to teach every branch of a living language.*

The carefulness which the use of interlineal translation demands, in order to produce all the benefit which may be expected from it, requires, on the part of learners, some discernment and power of self-direction. Children under twelve or thirteen would, if left to themselves, be apt to attend to the native more than to the foreign language, or to be satisfied with the meaning of individual words, without attending to the sense of the whole sentence. To them interlineal translations would also sometimes cause great perplexity; for, besides difference of idiom, which does not permit the use of precisely corresponding expressions in the two languages, and which renders translation more unintelligible as it is more literal, the authors of some of these works have thrown unnecessary difficulties in the way of the student: forgetting that most words have several acceptations, and that many of them even stand for different parts of speech, they have used their utmost ingenuity in perverting the sense by an affectation of giving a verbatim translation. It demands great powers of reflection and conception to be able from the context to succeed in discovering the sense of these enigmatical interpretations. Adherence to the spirit, rather than to the letter of the original text, would, in our opinion, constitute the merit of translations intended to assist beginners.

In transpositive languages, in Latin for example, an interlineal translation of the original text would present such a confused medley of words, that it would be almost impossible to divine from them the meaning of the author. Further assistance should therefore be afforded to beginners: this may be done by the adoption of the method suggested by Dumarsais, and successfully

* See *Edinburgh Review*, No. 87, for an able defence of the interlineal method of translation; see also *An Essay on a System of Classical Instruction, combining the methods of Locke, Milton, Ascham, and Colet, &c.*, published by Taylor and Walton, London.

followed by many eminent professors on the continent.* This method consists in at first introducing learners to a text arranged conformably to the genius of their native idiom, and accompanied with an interlineal translation in which the words omitted in elliptical expressions are supplied, and afterwards turning their attention to the pure text of the original, when, by means of the interlineal translation of the simplified text, they have become acquainted with its words and the nature of the subject.

In the usual way of proceeding, if young people cannot of themselves construe the Latin phrase or supply the ellipsis, so as to comprehend the idea which it is intended to convey, the instructor decomposes and explains it for them, until they have learned how to do so themselves. There cannot therefore be a rational objection to works which, in the absence of the instructor, supply his place. The construction, which is beneficial when made *vivâ voce*, cannot surely become prejudicial by being written. In the same manner that a skilful teacher, after having explained the original phraseology by means of what is called the construction, accustoms his pupils to follow the ideas of the author on the original text itself, and fixes it in their minds by frequent reference to it, so those who read by themselves with the aid of such works should constantly turn to that text, and endeavour, by familiarising themselves with it, to become independent of the introductory construed text.

It must not be said that these introductory books would create in the minds of learners false notions respecting the genius of the language which they study. Familiarity with the simple style of a juvenile work in the native or a foreign language, as was before remarked, does not injure the taste in literary composition, or prevent future enjoyment of the transpositive and figurative style of poetry. If any danger of this kind could arise from early acquaintance with the simplified construction of the text, it could only be in the possibility of learners adopting it in composition; but such a danger is chimerical, since the writing and speaking of Latin are no longer desirable. Should even these useless accomplishments be aimed at, the reading of two or three volumes thus arranged could not produce this effect. The attentive study and frequent perusal of the pure original text, which we recommend, and every volume read afterwards, would tend to set learners right on this point.

* See Dumarsais' *Exposition d'une Méthode raisonnée pour Apprendre le Latin.*

Facilities are now afforded in Great Britain and France for the adoption of Dumarsais' plan, because various Latin works have been published in those countries with the construction arranged conformably to that of the native tongue, and accompanied with an interlineal interpretation. Others also have been printed with two translations, one literal and the other free, which equally enable learners to ascertain critically the meaning of the author. But the seriousness of the subject of some of these works renders them fit only for adults.

Reference to a free and faithful translation in the native tongue would, under any circumstances, remove the difficulties which may be presented either by the inversion and ellipsis of the original, or by the strange collocation of the native words in the interlineal interpretation. Its previous perusal could, in the absence of other aid, afford to beginners considerable facilities in their first attempt at translating the foreign text. Such a translation would also prove useful to native instructors not thoroughly acquainted with the foreign idiom, and to foreigners not conversant with the language of their pupils. (21.)

SECT. VII.—OBJECTIONS REFUTED.

Marginal, interlineal, and other interpretations accompanying the foreign text, although founded in reason and recommended by the highest authorities, have still to contend against prejudice and blind routine. Amongst their most strenuous opponents and scoffers are some authors of grammars and vocabularies, interested in the adoption of a different course. These advocates of the up-hill-work system object that verbal interpretations afford too great a facility in translating, make learners advance too rapidly, account not for idiomatic forms, and do not exercise the mind.

Of these four objections, the first and second are too futile, too illogical, to deserve consideration. As to the third, we will observe that the dictionary does not account for irregularities of construction better than do these introductory books: such investigations can be best pursued when some practical acquaintance with the language has been gained. However, this is not, at any time, and much less in the first stages, the end proposed in learning a language. The comprehension of an author's meaning is the paramount object, and this object can be accomplished by a literal interpretation more effectually than by a dictionary.

The fourth objection is equally unfounded; for the mind is necessarily exercised in receiving ideas, whatever be the means by which they are acquired. Besides, it cannot be expected that its higher powers could be completely cultivated, when the learner is merely engaged in ascertaining what are the words of one language corresponding to those of another. Reflection, conception, imagination, and judgment begin to take an active part in the study, only when a certain degree of proficiency enables the student to determine the meaning of unknown words from consideration of the context, when acquaintance with a sufficient number of facts permits him to infer the rules of the language by induction, when familiarity with the foreign construction enables him to compare the geniuses of the two languages, and, finally, when, in translating from the foreign into the native tongue, he can perceive the beauties of the one and transfer them into the other.

The above-mentioned auxiliaries have also been objected to on the unfounded supposition that the facility which they give in translating creates in learners habits of *indolence, carelessness,* or *dependence.*

In answer, it may be observed, that the very facility with which translation is effected by their means being attended with a certain degree of pleasure and, hence, of interest, is the surest encouragement to industry. Besides, the attention requisite to retain the meanings of words and ascertain the exact sense presented by their various arrangements would suffice to keep up mental activity. But suspicion of indolence will be completely removed, if the instructor proportion the length of the task to the ease with which it is accomplished. If, through these auxiliaries, learners come at the ideas of the author in one tenth of the time which would be required were they to apply to a dictionary, they ought to read ten times as much. The reproach of generating indolence in learners applies far more justly to the lexicon process, the tediousness and difficulty of which suffice to weary and dishearten the most diligent.

Carelessness will infallibly be detected if young people are examined on a text free from explanations. The great facility afforded to them by the introductory books will leave even the dullest without excuse for the non-fulfilment of his allotted task. The greater the facility for learning, the greater should be the accuracy required by the master at the time of examination. And if the same method is employed to discourage negligence in

a learner who uses a literal interpretation as in one who uses a dictionary, there is no reason why it should not have the same effect.

With regard to the habits of dependence which such books may be supposed to give to a learner, the imputation is equally applicable to the dictionary, and indeed to every means employed in commencing the study of any art. Because an infant avails himself of the hand offered by his mother to assist his first steps, does it follow that he will always be dependent on that hand? Let the student abstain from these helps as soon as he finds that he has gained familiarity with the words. But how can they be consistently objected to, when, for the last two hundred years, the great academical establishments of England have sanctioned the use of Latin versions appended to Greek classics, as the most efficient means of introducing those who know Latin to an acquaintance with Hellenic literature? Who can seriously say that Greek is the only language in the study of which the method of literal interpretation is effectual?

It is particularly to self-instructing students, and to those who can translate in the intervals of the lessons, that the various helps above mentioned are useful: after having used two or three volumes with a literal interpretation, and as many with a free translation, they could prosecute their studies with a dictionary. But the assistance which these works give, can in no instance, be as efficient as that of a well-informed instructor, who can always suit the explanation of difficulties to the capacity of each individual, and illustrate passages in a more satisfactory manner than could be done in writing: yet such is the facility afforded by these explanatory books for beginning the study of the written language, that children, who at all times need the assistance of a teacher, might successfully undertake that study under the direction even of a person ignorant of the language.

SECT. VIII.—ADVANTAGES ARISING FROM THE INTRODUCTORY BOOKS.

With any of the above-mentioned auxiliaries a learner may begin to translate a foreign text even before knowing the words of the second class or the verbs. He will not, perhaps, without this previous acquaintance arrive at the sense quite so readily, but with a little perseverance he cannot fail to

succeed. A new language is to a beginner a chaos, in which the eye perceives nothing distinctly; by degrees the objects become clearer, each assumes an appropriate place, and exhibits a distinguishing characteristic; after a while, the light dawning, they all present themselves in beautiful order. However, the words of the second class and the verbs, combined with the explanations of the initiatory books and the oral assistance which can be obtained, will enable a beginner to grapple at once with the difficulty of the foreign idiom. The rapidity with which through these means the sense of the author is caught, tends to render the work of reading much less tedious and more interesting than it would be if the dictionary were applied to. More ground being consequently gone over, the same words present themselves in more rapid succession and the more frequently in proportion as they are the more useful. "By the help of literal translations," says John Clarke, "a boy would make greater progress in the language in one year than without he could do in three or four." *

This process, analogous to that of nature, must evidently fix the words in the mind in a pleasing and impressible manner, thus stimulating the pupil onward in proportion as increasing familiarity with the foreign expressions renders him independent of assistance, and enables him to read with rapidity and pleasure. No time being wasted in endeavours to overcome extraneous obstacles, he will rapidly become acquainted with an extensive vocabulary and phraseology.

The young child, listening to his vernacular tongue, and the adult, among a people with whose language he is not very conversant, understand at first only the most familiar topics; but by perseverance in listening, and by means of incidental explanations, they both extend their power of comprehension to higher subjects, without looking into a dictionary, learning grammar, or writing exercises. A similar mode of proceeding may be adopted in reading the foreign books, with this difference, that the learner not being obliged, as in social intercourse, to allow words to pass without understanding them, ought always to ascertain their meanings; and, to this effect, the introductory books which we recommend are, next to the assistance of a teacher, the easiest and most expeditious way he has at his command.

We have dwelt on the propriety of affording to learners every

* *A Dissertation on the Usefulness of Translations of Classic Authors.*

facility for entering at once upon the translation of foreign authors, because it is the groundwork of improvement in all the departments of the study of language; and it is only when some proficiency has been made in reading that this study becomes a source of intellectual culture, and is productive of real benefit. The art of reading cannot be acquired too rapidly or pursued too actively. Yet many people have been led to the belief, that success in any branch of instruction is commensurate with the slowness and difficulty of the process by which it is attained. This erroneous notion receives additional weight from the old adage, *slow and sure*, which, on all occasions, is brought forward by those who never reflect on this subject. It is not enough for the adoption of a maxim, intended to regulate our actions, that it should be the condensed wisdom of experience; we must see that it is applicable to the case in point. The only meaning which this old saying seems to imply, in the present instance, is, that the ordinary method is *slow*, indeed, for the learner, and *sure* for the teacher, to whom it secures the pupil for a long period.

Slow and sure is an excellent motto for those who think that eight or ten years of life cannot be better employed than in acquiring the power of reading and explaining a few volumes written in a dead language; but those who, anxious to learn something besides, wish to acquire, in one-fourth of that time, a comprehensive knowledge of a language in all its branches, must not trifle away time; they must read extensively as well as carefully.

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CHAPTER II.

HOW TO READ.

SECT. I.—MODE OF PROCEEDING.—NECESSITY OF MUCH PRACTICE.

WE must, at the outset, advert to a practice, which, being as general as it is pernicious, should not remain unnoticed and uncondemned. We allude to the practice of pronouncing the foreign text in the first stages of reading.

In commencing the study of a foreign living language, the learner, whether in the presence or absence of his teacher, should guard against reading aloud, or to himself, each word or sentence, before translating it, as is commonly done in beginning to translate Latin. In the latter idiom, this practice is indispensable, to unravel the transpositive arrangement of its words, and to construe them conformably to the genius of the language into which they are to be translated; but the resemblance of construction in modern European languages, especially that between French and English, obviates such a necessity. This practice, without in the least assisting in apprehending the sense, implants the seeds of a defective pronunciation; for, as there exist in the two languages very great similarity and, in many instances, complete identity in their written syllables, people, under the influence of long habit in the vernacular pronunciation, cannot help assimilating in sounds syllables which, although composed of the same letters, are rarely pronounced alike. If the instructor did his duty in correcting every error, considerable time would be consumed by this yet-secondary exercise, to the prejudice of translation, which is the paramount exercise at the outset.

Defective pronunciation is not to be apprehended in Latin which, with the exception of its prosody, is now pronounced by modern nations in a manner analogous to the native pronunciation of each. Latin words may, in general, be safely pronounced by persons unacquainted with the language. Milton's

daughters were wont to read to him Latin and Greek works, although they did not understand them.

The difficulty of pronouncing a foreign language at the entrance upon the study would not be altogether obviated by the instructor's pronouncing each sentence for the pupil; because hearing strange words once would make an impression too slight to be retained, especially as the learner's ignorance of the language, at this early period, does not permit him to associate ideas with the sounds. Moreover, in the absence of his instructor, he could not forbear keeping up the practice of reading before translating, and bad habits of pronunciation would every day become more deeply rooted.

This practice is the more injudicious as it does not assist in comprehending an author. The import of the written words is, in a foreign language, completely independent of their pronunciation, because they stand as direct representatives of ideas for him who has not previously heard them, as they do for the deaf and dumb. It is otherwise with the native tongue, in which a child, having first associated ideas with sounds, can afterwards, when learning to read, understand the written expression only inasmuch as it recalls these sounds; he must ascertain how the written words are pronounced to know what they signify. The arts of reading the native and reading a foreign language cannot be assimilated.

Alternately pronouncing and translating each word or sentence constantly disjoins the subject, and, thereby, not only lessens the interest that the narrative might create, but also throws an obstacle in the way of making out the sense from the context. Besides, a beginner cannot attend, at the same time, to the pronunciation and construction, both being new to him: he necessarily neglects the one whilst attending to the other. Finally, this practice forms habits contrary to the object most desirable in translating—the power of doing so without preparation.

Skill in translating cannot, however, be attained without much practice; the learner must translate the initiatory books very literally, in order early to know the exact value of the words: and the younger he is the longer ought he to persevere in literal translation, this practice being consistent with the predominance of memory over judgment at an early age. As he passes from one volume to another, he gradually deviates from the literal version, until great familiarity with the foreign words and phraseology enables him instantaneously to conceive the

ideas of the author, and readily to express them in his own language. This great desideratum will be the sooner obtained, if he be frequently exercised in translating at sight. The more the genius of the foreign tongue differs from that of the native, the more difficult is extempore translation: it becomes even impossible, when the former, being transpositive, is to be rendered into a modern idiom which does not admit of inversion. The same may be said of poetry, which presents insurmountable obstacles to translation at sight.

As progress in reading depends on the quality as well as on the quantity of the practice, a learner, in the absence of his instructor, ought to translate at least the first hundred pages two or three times, never quitting a word or sentence without it being thoroughly understood. The steadiness of the first steps will secure correctness and rapidity in the art. Those who make use of interlineal or marginal interpretations should never neglect, after having, through their means, secured the sense of the author, to recommence their translation of each day on a text without explanation. At the very outset, one page properly studied is more profitable than ten read with precipitation and carelessness, not only because the knowledge of words thus acquired will be impressed better on the mind of the learner, and will, so far, aid his further progress, but because he will derive more pleasure from a clear understanding of the foreign author, and will early acquire the useful habit of investigating the subjects of study.

He should, however, guard against running into excess in this respect. Dwelling long on the first pages would render the task tedious and disagreeable, at the time his exertions would need to be stimulated by variety and novelty. Besides, by such dilatory minuteness, words and phrases of rare occurrence would occupy time and attention to the exclusion of those which are more immediately required; whereas, by rapid progress through the book, he will more frequently meet with those which are the most useful, and his acquisition of them will be consistent with the exigencies of colloquial intercourse.

The mode of proceeding should be nearly as follows:—Translate every day a few pages twice over, review each day the task of the preceding day, and, at the end of each week, that of the entire week: frequent refreshing is the secret of success in study. The learner may gradually leave off the third and second reading, as he feels that he has gained familiarity with the

foreign idiom, and read more as he does it with greater ease. The quantity which a learner may read daily should be regulated, not by what an instructor, in his occasional lessons, has leisure to hear in class, but by the time which he himself can devote to it in his private studies, and by the facility with which he performs this exercise.

Too much time is generally consumed in accomplishing the translation of the first volumes. In the commencement, improvement is in inverse ratio to the time employed in reading a book. The first five hundred pages, translated at the rate of ten pages a day, would, admitting an equal degree of attention, forward a learner in reading more than if they had been read at the rate of one page a day. No one will doubt that a person would understand French much better, after having steadily read six volumes in six months, than after having taken six years to read them.

Habits of language, that is, the habitual association of words and ideas, can be created only by keeping the same words and phrases in rapid succession before the mind: the same number of impressions which, when closely following each other, produce a habit, would fail to have this effect, if separated by long intervals. Perseveringly translating every day for two hours at least will considerably facilitate the acquisition of this branch. Frequent recurrence, at short intervals, of the same words and of similar constructions, as well as the connection of the subject, renders each day's task easier by the recollection of what has so lately engaged the attention; and the consciousness the learner thus feels of his progress is to him the greatest encouragement to further exertion. When irregularity prevails, when days are allowed to pass without attending to this branch, the impressions of the last reading are effaced from the mind before the book is again taken up: the learner, Sisyphus-like, falls back continually and begins anew, without deriving much benefit from his past labour. But, if he daily work with diligence, he will soon find that he can translate an entire page in less time than he could one phrase when he began. In fact, if, incited by eagerness in the pursuit, and conscious that success in it depends on himself, he follows our directions, his improvement cannot fail to be rapid.

SECT. II.—INSTRUCTION TO BE IMPARTED BY THE PROFESSOR.

As soon as an extensive acquaintance with words—the chief object in reading the first books,—has been attained, the student ought to moderate his pace, and read foreign works "slowly and deliberately." The more familiar he is with the various import of the words and the peculiar structure of the language, the better will he be able to attend to the style and subject, and thus enter into the spirit of the author.

When the foreign language is readily understood, it is easy to explain its grammar and genius, to analyse the style and subject, or to investigate philological questions. This, then, is the time when the teacher may take a more active part in the progress of his pupils, and enter on the science of language with those who aim at literary discrimination and mental culture. By critical explanation of foreign authors he may, according to the different degrees of advancement of his class, gradually unfold the great departments of classical instruction,—grammar, rhetoric, logic, and philosophy.

Let the professor frequently take up one of the standard works which his class have read, and, after having ascertained that the learners understand it, let him make them analyse it minutely as regards the words, their nature, inflections, pronunciation, derivation, synonymy, and different acceptations; let him bring under their notice all peculiarities of syntax and prosody; let him particularly direct their attention to the roots and primitive words from which are derived those of their own language; for the study of the vernacular must never be lost sight of. Let him assist them in inferring the rules of grammar from the various changes which words undergo, from their mutual dependence, or from the different places which they assume in relation to each other; let him, in short, attend to the observations on grammatical and logical analysis found in the third Chapter of Book VI. on Grammar. He will afterwards, by degrees, as they read more fluently and critically, turn their attention to style, point out propriety, force, or nobleness of expression; precision, perspicuity, elegance, or harmony of periods, everything, in short, which constitutes literary merit. But he must not be satisfied with stating what is good or beautiful, he must also explain why it is so.

Such investigations are of the highest interest and far more useful than mnemonic lessons and grammatical exercises, as means of making learners acquainted with the genius of a language and the principles of style. Yet we fear that, demanding, as they do, depth of information and powers of discrimination not required for the routine curriculum of scholastic studies, they will not be generally substituted for them, until the standard of excellence in the educational profession is raised by liberal salaries and public estimation.

If ancient classics be the objects of study, the professor will, moreover, examine the solution of disputed points, as proposed by commentators, and will not allow any intricate passage to remain an impediment to the future progress of the learners; he will explain to them all historical, geographical, and archeological allusions; and make them acquainted with the memorable events and celebrated characters of antiquity, as also with the customs and manners, the civil, political, and religious institutions of the ancients, which may clear up the facts and explain the text of their author; he will point on the map of the modern world to the sites of the places mentioned by the Greek and Roman writers; he will compare the state of science and art among the ancients and the moderns, and show where the former erred from imperfect knowledge of the laws of nature; in a word, he will render classical studies truly useful, by making the knowledge of the past always bear on the present. But it should be kept in mind that in junior classes the chief object of these investigations is to enable young persons to conceive rightly the author's meaning, and to obtain critical knowledge of the language: anything beyond this would be premature.

To render explanations clear and impressive, the professor should turn to the black board, whenever visible illustrations can be given; he should also have within reach maps, engravings, gems, casts, and models from the antique, to which, in the course of his lesson, he may refer to elucidate the author in hand. He may avail himself of the taste which some of his pupils have for drawing, by occasionally desiring them to sketch objects described by the author—arms, instruments, vases, monuments, the plan of a camp, the respective positions of two armies, everything, in fact, which throws light on the classic passage. As the author's meaning is thus forcibly illustrated through perception, vivid and indelible impressions of his words are left on the minds by their association with interesting objects.

The task of the professor, however, is not confined to the explanation of the text; he should also seize every opportunity to cultivate the taste of his pupils and give proper direction to their moral faculties. He should make them conscious of the excellencies of thought with which the ancients abound; and, if he feel that enthusiasm which classical literature always excites in its enlightened votaries, he will easily impart his own feelings to his pupils, and raise in their minds that admiration of the beautiful which bespeaks refined taste. He should show what is true or false in the statements of the ancient writers, what is laudable or blameable in the characters whom they uphold, and what, in the sentiments which they express, is conformable or contrary to Christian morality. Nevertheless, in the midst of the pagan absurdities and the false notions of moral philosophy entertained by the ancients, there exist in their orators, poets, historians, and philosophers, many sentiments worthy of our sympathies and our imitation, many examples of humanity, disinterestedness, greatness of soul, and patriotism. Lessons of morality may be found in the works of almost all eminent writers, ancient or modern. These are the more striking in the classics of antiquity, as moral excellence is in them always adorned by literary beauty, and thus they leave in the youthful mind impressions never to be effaced. These scattered and incidental lessons, which might often pass unnoticed by students, will be carefully elicited by a skilful instructor. He will make them subjects of useful reflection, and will take advantage of them to inspire his pupils with noble sentiments and excite them to virtuous actions.

In the upper classes of schools and colleges the professor, entering upon the field of higher criticism, ought, in explaining standard works, ancient or modern, to inquire into the propriety of expression, and the diversity of style which arises from the difference of subjects treated and from varieties in the characters of authors or nations. He ought to exhibit the genius of the writers, the sources whence they drew, and the inspirations they received from the times in which they lived; he ought to investigate the characteristic merit of each, compare the different productions which treat of the same subjects, and show how, in oratorical disputes, the opposite sides of a question have been defended; he ought to examine the reciprocal influence which the literature and social condition of a country had on each other, and also the causes which led to the progress of poetry,

oratory, and philosophy, at particular periods; he ought to elicit the comparative merits of the ancient and the modern languages in force, copiousness, flexibility, harmony, and logical structure; finally, he ought to notice the passages most worthy of imitation, and show, by examples drawn from ancient and modern writers, what the latter have borrowed from the former. But to ensure the benefit of these prelections, they should be made to alternate with a parallel analysis of the national writers who have pursued the same paths of literature as the ancients. The comparison instituted between their kindred compositions would adjust their respective claims to our admiration. England, France, Germany, and Italy, now emulate ancient Greece and Rome in several departments of literature: their standard authors are worthy of the same respect and the same critical and philosophical investigation as those of antiquity.

In exhibiting to his pupils the primary sources from which modern civilisation and literature have been drawn in various proportions, the professor must assist them in discovering what every age and every nation have appropriated from this common inheritance. And if he be imbued, as he ought to be, with this idea, that a language is the characteristic impress of the spirit of the people among whom it is formed and improved, he will, when considering its origin and progress, not only investigate its absolute and relative merits as an instrument of thought, but he will trace the vicissitudes through which the nation that spoke it has passed in its gradual ascent from barbarism to civilisation.

The critical and philosophical information which has been adverted to being imparted to the students not in formal lectures, but in familiar notices, wherever a word or an allusion suggests, and when the mind is prepared for it, will gradually and imperceptibly make them conversant with ancient and modern literature; it will render the explanation of classical authors the most profitable of all exercises with the professor. If it be delivered to a large class, and with animation, the sympathies, the spirit of inquiry, and the intellectual energies of the students will be brought into more active operation, than if the same information had been offered to their attention in the printed volume.

But the professor may sometimes fail in powers of elucidation, or his pupils in attention to his prelections; these should, therefore, according as the subject permits, be made the groundwork of essays in the national language, and be followed either

immediately, or at a subsequent sitting, by the examination of the class. This double practice is the indispensable accompaniment of oral instruction: it enables the teacher to ascertain if he has been listened to or understood, as also to correct misunderstandings and supply deficiencies. The examination puts his abilities to the test as much as extemporaneous lecturing, for he must accommodate his questions to the capacities of the learners, encourage their efforts, aid them in difficulties, and draw out all their resources. To the student this succession of critical investigations, compositions, and examinations, is most beneficial: when they are obliged to give, in their own words, an account of the instruction imparted to them, the attention is sustained, industry stimulated, and intellectual independence ensured; the memory is exercised in storing the facts and reasonings brought forward by the professor, the judgment in investigating their mutual relation, and the faculty of speech in condensing and systematising scattered knowledge. They are, in this manner, led to the chief ends of classical education—the habit of serious reflection and nice discrimination, together with the adoption of sound principles in literary criticism, and the power of arranging their ideas and clothing them in suitable language.

SECT. III.—EXERCISE OF THE MIND IN INTERPRETING THE FOREIGN TEXT.

When students have attained proficiency in reading, their further progress is secured by consideration of the phraseology rather than of the words. Translating sentences, not words, should henceforth be their aim. As they advance, they gradually deviate from literal translation, and choose the expressions which best suit the genius of their own language, preserving, at the same time, the spirit of the original. A free version shows better than a literal one the difference of construction in the two languages, and permits nearer approach to the identical idea of the foreign author. Translation thus becomes truly an exercise in extemporaneous composition, in which the student competes with his model, and tries to equal him in clearness, force, and elegance.

A beginner finds in a literal translation annexed to the foreign text the fittest auxiliary for gaining acquaintance with words; but an advanced student will best enter into the spirit of a

foreign writer, when at a loss for his meaning, by a reference to a free translation. The aid must be of a higher nature with the higher aim of the learner. Many faithful and well written interpretations of ancient and modern classics could be procured, which would answer this object; for works of merit in every language have, for the most part, been translated.

But, before a learner applies to a standard translation, or to any other external aid, he should appeal to his own reflective and reasoning powers. The meaning of the words which now remain unknown to the learner should, if possible, be inferred from the context,—an inductive mode of proceeding highly advantageous, as it exercises the understanding and gives habits of mental activity and independence. In the pursuit of any branch of instruction, that method must be preferred, which leads the mind to depend on its own exertions rather than on the evidence of others. The learner should then endeavour to discover some resemblance between the unknown words and those which he knows, either in his own language or in any other; he should decompose them to find in their roots or their terminations some clue to their import; this may also be apprehended from the context or from a consideration of the author's views. In adverting to this mode of arriving at the meaning of words, Dugald Stewart observes, that there is carried on in the mind of the learner a process of natural induction on the same general principles which are recommended in Bacon's philosophy.*

Not only would this investigation be favourable to mental discipline, but the information thus gained would be more indelibly impressed on the mind, precisely because it had been discovered by mental efforts. Almost all the words we know of our own language have been acquired in this manner. By a process of instinctive analysis and induction, which commences at a very early age, we decompose the sentences into their elements, as we hear the same words used on various occasions. Every instance in which the general meaning of a sentence is understood, leaves some idea respecting the signification of the words met for the first time in that sentence: as they recur, our repeated attempts to discover some common meaning which corresponds with their different acceptations enable us to apprehend with precision their import.

Dugald Stewart, with his usual accuracy, thus describes this process: "The first sentence where the word occurs, affords, it

* See *Philosophical Essays*, Part II.

is probable, sufficient foundation for a vague conjecture concerning the notion annexed to it by the author, some idea or other being necessarily substituted in its place, in order to make the passage at all intelligible. The next sentence where it is involved, renders this conjecture a little more definite; a third sentence contracts the field of doubt within still narrower limits, till, at length, a more extensive induction fixes completely the signification we are in quest of. There cannot be a doubt, I apprehend, that it is in some such way as this, that children slowly and imperceptibly enter into the abstract and complex notions annexed to numberless words in their mother-tongue, of which we should find it difficult or impossible to convey the sense by formal definitions." *

Should a student feel a doubt on the accuracy of his conjecture, he may still be satisfied with the acceptation which he thinks the word bears in relation to the rest of the sentence: if that word be useful, it will occur again; and if the learner be not confirmed in his first conception of it, he may then apply to the dictionary, in the absence of a person able to assist him. But even granting that he should remain ignorant of a few words which he meets in the course of his reading, we do not see that this could be any greater evil than his being unacquainted with thousands of words which do not come within his practice. In the native tongue a reader often apprehends fully the sense of a sentence, although he could not define the exact meaning of each word.

SECT. IV.—ON THE USE OF DICTIONARIES.

The act of finding the meaning of a word in a dictionary does not constitute a discovery, any more than being told it or taking it from a translation: it is a mere reliance on the testimony of others with the additional uncertainty and confusion arising from various interpretations. Nor does the manual operation of turning over the leaves of a lexicon impress the words better on the memory; it only diverts attention from the intellectual pursuit of the moment. To say that this tedious labour affords mental aid is equal to saying that the more circuitous the process of learning, the quicker is the progress—a downright absurdity. In fact, no physical exercise can aid in retaining a mental acquisition any more than all the workings of the mind

* *Philosophical Essays*, Part I.

can develop a muscle, or give pliancy to a limb. Mental action alone can ensure the recollection of ideas and their signs.

To recollect words, we must fix the attention on them in connection with the ideas they represent; but the schoolboy who uses a dictionary seldom carries his thoughts beyond the first letters which serve him as a clue to the word he wants; his mind is so little engaged in the occupation, that he not unfrequently chooses this time for talking with those who sit near him. The labour of the search is purely manual, and he gains a knowledge of the word from the dictionary neither as pleasantly nor with the same economy of time or the same precision of meaning as he would from a living assistant or a translation. He does not usually recollect it better, because he uses no mental exertion in the search, and bestows no attention on it after the mechanical labour is over. The tediousness alone of the occupation is remembered, and remembered with a painful feeling, which produces aversion to the study.

The inefficiency of the dictionary as a mnemonic auxiliary is proved by experience. We have already mentioned the fact, well known even to the most attentive learners, that the same word has often to be looked for several times at short intervals. Another proof is afforded by the rapidity with which the ancient languages are usually forgotten: the greater number of classical students, a few years after having left school, preserve but a faint recollection of the Latin or Greek words learned with so much trouble from the dictionary, whereas they retain, to the latest period, the native ones which they have gained from conversation or from books, and for the meaning of which they never applied to a dictionary. It may be remarked also that, before the introduction of this auxiliary, many men attained to great eminence in ancient literature through purely oral explanations of the classic writers.

The little time which, in large schools, a teacher can now devote to each of his pupils does not permit him to give them himself the explanations which they individually require; he gets rid of their importunities by referring them to their dictionaries, softening, at the same time, his denial of assistance by the consoling remark that their recollection of the words will be in proportion to their trouble; and so, on the *ipse dixit* of the master, this sage maxim passes current. But it is obvious that the lexicon is resorted to as a matter of convenience, not as the best means of ascertaining the signification of words.

Although it must be admitted that dictionaries are very tedious and imperfect instruments for converting one language into another, yet we are aware that they become indispensable and must be consulted when readier and more natural means fail. But it must never be forgotten, that words, being only the signs of things, no dictionary can convey a distinct conception of a word until the mind has a clear perception of the thing signified.

To a learner desirous of improvement, who is already advanced in a foreign language and able to determine the suitableness of the words to the text, the use of this auxiliary would prove beneficial both as a means of ascertaining their import and as an exercise in discrimination. Whereas, in the hands of young children, or at an early stage of the study, this mode of proceeding is purely mechanical, and there is no adequate compensation for the great expenditure of time which it causes. Dictionaries in two languages are the more perplexing to a beginner, as they often present but approximate interpretations: many words are peculiar to one language and cannot be rendered in another. All idioms abound with expressions of this kind. Other words, which, in their primitive and proper sense, have the same import in two different languages, become untranslatable in some of the figurative acceptations which they occasionally assume.

As an auxiliary in reading, a small dictionary would suffice; for the proper sense of a word being once ascertained, its different applications in particular cases may easily be conceived. But, for the purpose of translating into a foreign language—an exercise suited only to the last stages of the study—a large dictionary is preferable, because the learner wants to select, among the different words given, that which suits best the idea which he has to convey. He requires to see it used in different sentences illustrative of its various import, and the larger the lexicon is, the greater number of these explanations and illustrations will it contain.

The lateness of the publication is another motive of preference in choosing a dictionary; for, as all such works are now mere compilations, the newest is likely to supply the deficiencies of predecessors and to give the orthography confirmed by the t modern usage.*

When in translating a living language, a learner, not yet

* Dr. A Spier's *Dictionary of the French and English Languages*, which has very lately appeared, is remarkable for its methodical arrangement, and is calculated, for accuracy and comprehensiveness, to satisfy inquisitive minds in every walk of literature, science, and art.

master of its pronunciation, has occasion to apply to a dictionary, he should avoid repeating the unknown word to himself, while looking for it. This practice is harmless in a dead language, but most injurious in a living one. Thinking of the letters which compose the words will sufficiently assist in the search, and bad habits of pronunciation will thus be avoided.

Anxious to facilitate the work of searching for words in a dictionary, we warn inexperienced learners, that, as the initials at the head of each column refer to the last word of it, it is by applying at once to that word, that they will, without loss of time, ascertain whether the word they seek is in that column. Trifling as this piece of information may appear, it is most valuable as a means of saving time and labour.

We must here advert to the injudiciousness of preserving, as some modern lexicographers do, the old classification of the words beginning with *i* and *j*, and those beginning with *u* and *v*. Our ancestors considered the characters *j* and *v* only as other forms of *i* and *u*, which accounts for their alphabetical arrangements of them in vocabularies; but now that these have become distinct letters, it is inconsistent with reason to jumble them together, to the great perplexity of young people.

After the diligent and consecutive reading of eight or ten volumes, a student possessing general information, extensive knowledge of his own language, and habits of mental activity, will but rarely need to apply to the dictionary. Under any circumstances, the more assiduously one reads, the less the dictionary is required; because the same words presenting themselves to the learner more frequently, and in more rapid succession, are easily remembered, and their meaning sufficiently explained by the ever-varying circumstances in which they occur; as is proved in the case of those who, in their own language, have read many volumes and have fully understood them from the context and through the occasional help of oral explanations. If but little is read, the same words recurring only at long intervals, the learner has not the same facility in apprehending their meanings or recollecting them, and a dictionary becomes indispensable. This is the case with those who, in pursuance of the *slow and sure* method, read the classics at the rate of one or two volumes a year.

SECT. V.—DIFFERENCE IN THE MODES OF PROCEEDING WITH ADULTS AND CHILDREN.

Opposed as some of our suggestions may be to common routine, we believe that they will be found conformable to the natural course pursued in acquiring the vernacular tongue, and to the practice of the most eminent linguists. We shall further observe that, in reading the first volumes, the learner, especially an adult, should attach himself only to the sense of the author without trying to analyse, by the test of grammar, every expression which may appear irregular. It was in this manner that the great orientalist, Dr. Alexander Murray, had, as he informs us, at the age of sixteen, learned in eighteen months not less than four languages—French, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. "I always strove," he says, "to seize the sense; but, when I supposed that I had succeeded, I did not weary myself with analysing any sentence."*

Much should at first be taken for granted, especially in a living tongue, when a practical knowledge of it is the end proposed. If the ideas of the author are apprehended, the object of reading is attained: inquiring into the reasons of the peculiarities of the foreign idiom only impedes progress through the book, without making it more intelligible. Let the reader reflect, that, in his own language, he can seldom solve difficulties of such a kind: he cannot account for innumerable anomalies and idiomatic forms, although, in common practice, he properly applies every expression and never hesitates about their signification. Few English persons, for example, even among the well educated, know, or care to know, the reasons of the following deviations from grammar or from the proper meaning of words, *two mackerel, a few salmon, a brace of snipe, of woodcock, of partridge; many a day, now a days; methinks; would I were there; were I to put up with it; I had rather stay; you had better go*, and a thousand other equally odd expressions which are in daily use.

Those who distrust their memory should write each new word as it occurs, after having ascertained its meaning; all the words acquired during the day should be carefully studied each succeeding day. Thus, at little cost, a large stock of words would soon be fixed in the mind. If the learner, when reading alone,

* Letter to Rev. Maitland.

should meet words which his dictionary fails to interpret, or idiomatic intricacies which, for want of explanatory notes, he has no means of unravelling, let him mark them with a pencil line in the margin, to have them explained by his teacher the next time he is with him. This practice would save considerable time, and enable the student to advance rapidly,—his progress through the book not being retarded by the slow process of examination in class, which may then be dispensed with. Should he have no instructor or friend to whom he can apply for such explanations, let him, when he has completed the reading of the volume, reconsider the difficult passages he has marked, and he will find, that further acquaintance with the subject and the style of the work will clear up that which, at the first perusal, appeared obscure.

These suggestions are addressed to adults, especially to those whose chief object is to gain practical knowledge of the foreign language, and whose time for its acquisition is limited. Such persons should beware of delay in their progress in reading; for it is, we repeat it, of the utmost importance to advance rapidly in an acquirement on the possession of which depends, in great measure, improvement in the three other branches.

It is obvious that many of the above suggestions, especially those which refer to self-direction, could not strictly be followed by children who, as yet, possess but very limited knowledge of their own language. Ignorant as they must often be of the native words which correspond in meaning and spelling to the foreign ones, they could have no clue by which to discover the signification of these foreign words. An extensive knowledge of things and a large supply of native words will, therefore, be needed as a preparation for translating in the absence of an instructor, or as a means of dispensing with the dictionary. It may, in general, be affirmed, that foreign authors will be better understood, and progress in reading be more rapid, in proportion as the mind of the learner is better informed and more highly cultivated; because figurative forms will be more easily perceived, allusions more promptly seized, sentiments more fully entered into, and arguments more closely followed.

Young persons, from twelve to fifteen years of age, who learn with a view to mental culture, as is more especially the case in pursuing the classical course, and who study chiefly in school, should analyse every form of speech, ascertain the functions of words, their etymology and syntactical relations;

they ought, when in class, to investigate with the professor every idiomatical expression which admits of explanation.

Children under the age of twelve, who are made to learn a language by the comparative process, incapable of preparing class lessons by themselves, and demanding the constant watchfulness of a guide, must be taught separately, and must, until the age of twelve or thirteen, translate simple and easy works several times under the eye and with the aid of an instructor, who ought to be their living dictionary. They should not be left to themselves, for, anxious as they may be to fulfil the task imposed, they will, for the greater part, be unable to judge whether or not they understand the foreign author; whether the ideas which they attach to the new words they meet suit or do not suit the circumstances to which they refer; whether the native expressions by which they render the foreign ones are correct or incorrect. For half a page that they would badly translate, when left to themselves, they would, with an assistant, translate several pages correctly, cheerfully, and profitably. The instructor must, therefore, devote much of his time to them. But, in affording them the benefit of his services, he should aid and direct their exertion, rather than free them from the necessity of using any: he should put them in the road, not carry them through the course.

Learners who have passed the age of twelve or thirteen, being able to understand without aid the greater portion of an author, require little of the professor's time, and that little may then be employed to greater advantage for them in explaining intricate passages, and commenting on the language and the ideas in the manner unfolded above. (See Section II. of this Chapter.) With very young children, on the contrary, the teacher should not only construe, explain, and translate for them every part of the book, but he should also examine them after they have translated again in the interval of the lessons what he has previously explained. In schools, when circumstances permit, the work of examination may devolve on monitors, who, in helping their juniors in a branch which lies within their power of explanation, will thereby have the advantage of reviewing what they have not translated for a long time before.

SECT. VI.—OF THE PARTIAL READING OF WORKS.

The practice of reading only detached parts of books can impart but a superficial knowledge both of the subject and of the language. It is incumbent on learners to finish a work once begun: let their instructors recommend none but such as are worthy of being read entirely. Much of the interest and profit is lost when books are but half read: the second part of a work generally indemnifies us for the trouble we have had in reading the first. As we advance in a volume, we become acquainted with the author's peculiarities of style and our minds are gradually identified with his. Perseverance through the work, necessarily bringing a repetition of the same words and phraseology, engraves them on the memory. The comparative facility also with which the latter part is read is a source of pleasure and a manifest indication of improvement. It is, then, unreasonable to deprive students, as is often done, of this gratification, of this stimulus to further exertion, by making them read only portions of works. More unreasonable still is it to expect that learners can become conversant with the literature of a country by the perusal of extracts from various authors, however judicious their selection be.

The beauties of literary productions are not confined to propriety of terms and to choice of language; they should also be sought in conception of design, consistency of characters, and nice adaptation of parts. To these excellences, which can be perceived only by the reading of the whole work, the attention of the learner should be directed, as well as to the meaning or the grammatical analysis of words. Besides, young people should, in every department of their studies, be early trained to the useful habit of persevering to completion.

Bossuet strictly adhered to this plan in teaching the Dauphin, son of Louis XIV. He declares, in a letter to Pope Alexander IX., that he never confined his pupil to portions of classics, but made him read each work entirely without stopping, and, as it were, in one breath, "that the Prince might be able to form a judgment not of a part only of a work, but of the whole design and the connection of the parts."

On the usual practice of confining boys to portions of the classic writers, Mr. Wyse observes, "What we do study, we not only

study out of its place, but in the worst form imaginable. We disjoin,—we confuse,—we take a fragment here, another there; we examine the scattered members of the author, but not the author himself. What more ingenious contrivance could be discovered to invert and disturb anything like rational order in reading, than our Collections, and Anthologies, and Selecta, and Delectus, &c.? A boy leaps from Herodotus to Theocritus, and from Theocritus to Xenophon, and not merely from one author to another, but from one chapter in one to a few dozen verses in the other. What idea can he possibly form by such a method,—I will not say of the origin, the development, the perfection of the language,—but of its very meaning. Every author of eminence has his own peculiar idiom: it is as much a part of him as his thought; but it is only to be explained by the author himself —it is only to be got at by the context, and the context can only be understood by continuous reading. The boy collects words, it is true, but they form a mere heterogeneous unconnected heap in his memory, they carry with them few of the associations which arise out of their application and position. He meets them under such different significations, in such different writers, and with such rapidity of transition, that they, at last, cease to have for him any precise signification at all. Had he been confined to one writer, and required to read him through, he would have, at least, learned one. Had he read him in his proper place, each of these words would have had all that additional value and interest which can only be conferred by place. But it is urged that, it being impossible to read the author through, the next best course is to select, at least, the beauties, and to impress them on the youthful mind. If this be the object, there could not be a worse way of impressing them. Relief is produced by surrounding depression: the lights of a picture owe their value to the shadows. The beauties of a writer cannot be felt detached from himself; they require the juxtaposition of other passages, and, as mere matters of phrase or painting, they lose their colour when thus taken out of their frame. As to other beauties, to which these ought to be quite subordinate, such as invention, disposition of the subject, combination, contrast of character, &c., these are sacrificed without remorse. They are excellences spread over too large a surface to be caught by this kind of reading; they cannot be shut up quintessentially in a page." *

The desultory course which prescribes to students of the

* *Edinburgh Review.*

ancient languages only portions of classics is destructive of literary taste, thoroughness in learning, and habits of patient thought, as it is devoid of interest and contrary to reason. Few persons feel, in after-life, a desire of finishing the classical volumes which they commenced at school, and which have left but very confused ideas on their minds; so that the greater number of those who follow such a scrap-reading system remain all their lives with very imperfect notions of the historical facts contained in some of the classics, and ignorant of much which is valuable in ancient literature.

Although the reading of many volumes is undoubtedly indispensable for the complete acquisition of a language, yet, when time does not permit, the plan of reading a few good authors entirely, rather than extracts from many, is far preferable. With the exception of the objectionable portion in some of them, the reading of every classic, once commenced, should be completed during the under-graduate course, as is the case with a few which are read for honours. This would easily be accomplished if the translation of the first volumes were facilitated, as recommended in the beginning of this Chapter; if the learner entered on the study of the ancient writers at an age to understand them; if, also, that time were devoted to them, which is consumed in prematurely learning grammar and writing exercises. But, while standard works are read entirely, the more difficult and intellectual task of analysing their style and commenting on their ideas might, as is now practised, be confined to select portions.

SECT. VII.—MENTAL READING AND TRANSLATION.

The means of rapidly enabling learners through translation to comprehend the written language having been detailed, there now remains to speak of the mode of attaining the highest degree of proficiency in the art of reading; we mean, the power of attending directly to the subject of the foreign works, without being diverted from it by any consideration of language. To accomplish this, the learner must avoid translating, and turn his attention to *mental reading*, which is the art of conceiving the ideas of an author directly from his expressions, without the interposition of the native words to interpret them. Thinking in a foreign language, which consists, as in the native, in the immediate association of signs and ideas, that is, their reciprocal

action in spontaneously recalling each other, is the goal towards which all his efforts should be constantly directed.

There are two different modes of thinking in a language, corresponding to the circumstances in which we are placed in using it, either in receiving or in communicating ideas. We think in a language when we conceive ideas directly from the words, on *reading* or *hearing* them; and, *vice versâ*, when we use them as the immediate signs of our ideas in *speaking* or *writing*. In the first instance, words recall ideas; in the second, ideas recall words.

Mental reading is the first stage in this most desirable acquisition, and prepares the way for complete possession of a foreign language, as it establishes in the mind, between ideas and their signs, immediate associations, so much the closer as they are the more frequently practised. These associations considerably facilitate the recollection of words and phraseology; because expressions, which, in the course of reading, have habitually suggested their corresponding ideas, are, in their turn, naturally and spontaneously recalled by those ideas when they afterwards arise in the mind. Thus mental reading is made subservient to speaking and thinking in that language.

Translation, on the contrary, which, in the beginning, is necessary to arrive at the meaning of words, becomes, after some progress has been made, an obstacle to the ready and clear comprehension of a foreign author; as spelling, the tedious ordeal through which children are commonly made to pass in learning the art of reading, would be an obstacle to the comprehension of national books. Translation, even mentally carried on, and under the most favourable circumstances, must, more or less, prevent that immediate connection of ideas which is indispensable for entering into the spirit of an author, for completely understanding and enjoying his subject. In transpositive languages, especially, mental reading becomes imperative, by reason of their ever-changing collocation, which involves great expenditure of time for construction, and adds to the difficulty of translation.

In translating, the eyes, it is true, are fixed on the foreign text, but the attention is principally directed to the native expressions through which the ideas are conveyed and with which they are consequently associated. The foreign words are not easily remembered, because there is no association established in the mind between them and the corresponding ideas. The

impressions on the senses cannot be well retained by the memory unless attention be exclusively directed to them, at the time they are received. We not only cannot recollect, but often remain unconscious of those impressions, when the mind is, at that moment, engaged in a different train of thought. Translation then impedes the exercise of the retentive power in acquiring materials for speaking and writing a foreign language.

Neither scientific nor philosophical works can be studied with the same advantage by translating as by direct reading. Hunting after the particular native expressions corresponding to those of the original, breaks in constantly upon the connection of the subject; and the mind, thus diverted, cannot easily follow a train of reasoning.

Wit and humour lose considerably by translation, particularly that which depends on the double acceptation of words, or on peculiar forms of speech. In imaginative and pathetic compositions the circuitous way of translation defeats the fondest hope of the author,—that of exciting the emotions of the reader, who cannot be affected by the most tender sentiments, the most heart-rending tale, when the mind is engaged in the pursuit of mere words.

Poetical works, especially, should not be read by translating; for, besides the metaphoric sense of words and the graces of style arising from transposition, which cannot be transferred into another language, what constitutes the characteristic merit of poetry,—quantity, rhythm, metre, rhyme, all the harmony of verse is lost to the reader, by a prose translation at sight. The excursive range of thought and exuberance of fancy, which are among the beauties of poetry, become insufferable blemishes in prose.

What more particularly makes oral translation so objectionable as a means of understanding a foreign author, is the difficulty and often impossibility of rendering into one language the ideas expressed in another. Languages, as already observed, are formed and perfected independently of one another, and under the influence of manifold circumstances peculiar to each. The systems of ideas of which they are the vehicles, and consequently their genius, must vary with the customs and manners of the people, with their climate, origin, religion, political institutions, degree of civilisation, intercourse with neighbouring nations, &c. Hence, we find in each numerous terms, idioms, and figurative expressions corresponding to these various circumstances which have

not their equivalents in the others. The oft-quoted aphorism of Boileau, "What is well conceived is clearly conveyed; and words are easily found for its expression,"* is far from being always true in original expression: it is particularly inapplicable to translation; for we may fully comprehend the thought of a foreign author, without being able to express it either clearly or easily in the native tongue.

The greater number of published translations corroborates this truth: we see from them that not only the difference in the genius of the languages, but the difference also in the national character both of the writers and of the people to whom the original and the translation are respectively addressed, adds to the difficulty of transfusing the spirit of one into the other, so as to preserve all the beauties of the original, and please the readers of the translation. Had Voltaire been endowed with even more genius than he possessed, he must have failed, as it is well known he has, in his attempt to translate Shakspeare.

The difficulty of translation is proverbial: "Traduttore traditore," (translator traitor) say the Italians. Madame de Sévigné compared translators to servants, who often deliver messages contrary to those which they receive from their masters. Translations have not been inaptly called "wrong sides of tapestry." The best of them, written even by eminent men, and in the meditation of the closet, are, in general, but imperfect copies of the master-pieces which they are intended to represent. What then must be a slovenly translation at sight?—The transformation of the animated and sublime creation of genius into a mangled corpse.

To a student anxious to advance in the art of reading a foreign language, it is a loss of time to turn over and over the native sentence corresponding to the original text: as soon as this text is understood, it matters little how it may be rendered into another language. To reach the acme of perfection in this art, he must use the foreign books as he does national ones: he must be able, on glancing rapidly over the words, to conceive the sense directly from them. The connection, the purport, the tendency of a work, or of oral discourse, can be duly attended to and comprehended only when the association of words with ideas is a habit of the mind.

But not only does mental reading give clearer perception of

* "Ce que l'on conçoit bien s'énonce clairement,
Et les mots pour le dire arrivent aisément."—*Art Poétique.*

the sense, force, and elegance of the original expression, it is also the most effective agent of success in translation itself. In fact, to a person who has command of the native tongue commensurate with his proficiency in mentally reading the foreign, translation presents no difficulty whatever; for if he conceives the ideas of a foreign author as rapidly as his eye can glance over the words, and if, on the other hand, he can, in his own language, express ideas as rapidly as he conceives them, it is evident that he must be able to translate foreign expressions as fast as sight conveys their meanings to his mind, when the difference of idiom, or the poverty of his own language, opposes no obstacles.

How desirable soever the power to read a foreign language mentally may be, very few persons ever attain it; in consequence, perhaps, of the unfounded belief entertained by some, that it is unimportant, and by others, that it is unattainable. Not two in five hundred of those who have received classical education could read and enjoy one of the standard Latin authors explained at school, and much less one not previously prepared, as they would a work in their national language.

That the art of mental reading is important has been clearly shown; that it is attainable is proved by experience in the acquisition of living languages: attention and perseverance suffice for mastering it. We do not see why an English or a French person acquainted with the Greek language should not read it as do the well-informed in modern Greece. Even Latin can, if properly studied, be read in this manner, notwithstanding its transpositive collocation. It was so read by the scholars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, who used it as a living language; they could not effectually have translated it, for their imperfect idioms were inadequate to interpret the ancient authors.

The power of directly apprehending the ideas of a foreign writer will be easily acquired, if, conformably to the method of nature and our previous suggestions, the original text is occasionally explained by the language of action, or the exhibition of the objects alluded to, and, when this is not practicable, by models, pictures, engravings, or linear sketches, which associate in the young mind the foreign words with the things signified. No practice will be found more effectual in breaking the learner from thinking in his mother-tongue.

Further facilities will be afforded for the attainment of this

end, by reading easy books, and reading the same several times, as also by attending to the general meaning of an author, without aiming at critical interpretation of his words. As practice in reading renders the foreign phraseology more and more familiar, translation should be gradually laid aside, until it can be dispensed with altogether. The consecutive and diligent reading of seven or eight volumes would suffice to impart the power of mental reading, save the translation of the new words which may occasionally be met. Success in it can be secured even without the aid of a teacher.

More completely to shake off the fetters of translation, we would recommend, when a dictionary becomes indispensable, the use of one written exclusively in the foreign language; this guards against the intrusion of the native words, and, by explaining and defining the foreign, is less likely to lead astray than a dictionary in two languages, which, through translation, gives only approximate meanings.

Should the student's progress in pronouncing the language have kept pace with his progress in understanding it, he will receive further assistance towards mental reading from uttering the words to himself, as he apprehends the ideas conveyed by them. His mind and organs of speech, thus simultaneously engaged, will be diverted from translation. By degrees, the frequent recurrence of the same words and phrases will so rapidly and so closely associate them in the mind with their signification, that an intermediate language will no longer be required; mental reading will be attained.

SECT. VIII.—BENEFITS OF ORAL TRANSLATION.

It must be well understood, that we object to translation only so far as it is incompatible with the highest attainments and practical purposes of a foreign language; if these objects be set aside, there can be no doubt that it is a valuable exercise.

Oral translation acts, as we have seen, a prominent part at the outset of the study; and, at a more advanced period, it may serve to render our knowledge of the foreign idiom useful to those who are unacquainted with it. It also becomes indispensable to students who have to undergo examination. At the same time, it must be observed, that translation is not always a good criterion, although the only one, by which to

measure proficiency in this branch; for the more the translator enters into the spirit of his author, and discerns the beauties of style, the more difficult it must be to find equivalent native expressions for the foreign ones.

It is, as an intellectual exercise, and as a means of improvement in the mother-tongue, that translation assumes its highest importance. Ascertaining the precise meaning of a foreign author, and selecting the words and forms of speech in the native tongue which most exactly convey his thoughts, is a double operation highly calculated to discipline the mind. Before the learner can venture to translate the foreign text, he must have exerted his understanding in apprehending the ideas of his author; he must, in some degree, have made them his own, by going with him over the same field of investigation. It is only when he has a clear conception of them that he can at all think of expressing them in his own language. This second operation again brings into action his mental powers, and all his resources of language: he is led to examine why one term has been selected in preference to another, to distinguish what propositions are principal, what secondary, and what is their mutual dependence. As almost every word may be translated in different ways, and every sentence in different styles, his discrimination and sagacity are constantly exercised in selecting the native expressions most suitable in each particular case. He must exert his imagination and judgment, not to overcharge his author's meaning, nor to fall short of it; he must be well imbued with the peculiar energy and grace of his model, to be able to transfuse the same qualities into his own style; and whether he succeed or fail, the actual labour of the attempt will be beneficial to him.

Another great advantage arising from the practice of oral translation, when continued for a long time, is the command of native words which it imparts. Aided by careful study of the national classics, it will prove a better preparation than rules and precepts for acquiring that magic power—extempore speaking—which instantaneously calls up the most appropriate terms, and suits the form of expression to the ideas. Not having passed through this ordeal, many persons are incapable of speaking in public, although they may write very correctly, because, in the act of communicating thought, right words do not arise spontaneously; they are only the slow result of reflection.

It needs scarcely be observed that learners who are yet incapable of self-direction should be assisted in all the investigations to which translation leads, and which make it so efficient in conferring command of the native tongue. They should be shown the various ways of rendering the same ideas—literally or freely—properly or figuratively,—and should be made to understand the reasons of the preference to be given to one of these forms over the other. The benefits which they will derive from this exercise will be greater in proportion as their instructor is better skilled in their native tongue.

Translation is not only an exercise in extemporaneous composition, it is also an analytical process which, by constantly bringing in contact the component elements of the two languages, leads to minute analysis of both. It cannot fail to bring under notice their nature, etymology, arrangement, and different acceptations, all of which escape observation in mental reading. If, in searching for and selecting native words as equivalents of foreign ones, none are allowed to pass without being fully understood, it will extend the learner's vocabulary, and consequently render instructive books and the conversation of well-informed persons in the native tongue more intelligible, interesting, and profitable than they would otherwise be.

Persevering in oral translation under the direction of an enlightened instructor would be more generally useful to young people than aiming at mental reading, an exercise tending exclusively to forward them in the foreign language. Improvement in the national idiom, for which the study of a second language is so desirable, must always be kept in view. Classical instruction is most favourable to the attainment of this object, because Greek and Latin teachers, as already remarked, know the language of their pupils, which is usually their own, sufficiently well to correct any error which they may commit. Every lesson in Greek and Latin may, and ought to be made, a lesson in the national tongue. If learners once acquainted with either of those languages be long employed in translating the best models of antiquity, they will be efficiently trained to critical use of their own, and to a perception of those qualities of style which contribute to the perfection of discourse.

In translating from a living language, and in any exercise in which that language is made subservient to the improvement of learners in their own, a native instructor can render more assistance to his pupils than a foreigner, who is seldom competent

to point out the best native expressions corresponding to the foreign. Not only can he render more service to the learners in their own language, but he can also best ascertain, by their manner of translating, whether they understand the foreign author: for this reason, the office of examining candidates required to know a foreign living language should be confided to natives, when translation from the foreign into the vernacular is the test. In the other departments of the study, however, a foreigner has greatly the advantage over a native instructor, as will subsequently be seen.

As the written translation from a foreign author is better calculated than the oral for exercising the mental powers and promoting improvement in the native tongue, we will treat more fully of these points in Book XI.

SECT. IX.—OF THE SECOND READING OF BOOKS.

Having conducted the learner through the successive steps which lead to the complete possession of the art of reading a foreign language, and having shown how, under the guidance of an enlightened professor, he may be familiarised with the characteristic merit of its literary productions, we will now present a few observations on another efficient means of promoting these objects, and making, at the same time, the practice of reading subservient to the acquisition of materials for conversation and composition in the foreign idiom.

Those who are anxious to approach perfection in a foreign language must adopt every means by which they can best study and imitate the style of its standard works. It is impossible, at a first perusal, to perceive all the force, elegance, and propriety of expression, to discover all the excellences or to appropriate all the valuable information which characterise eminent compositions: reiterated perusal is indispensable, for the accomplishment of these various ends. "If a book be worth reading once, it should be read twice," said Benjamin Franklin; we would add, if it be not worth reading twice, it should not be read at all.

To make reading subservient to improvement in the practical knowledge of a language, attention must be given to the form as well as to the ideas; and, to this effect, the second reading of a book is most desirable. In the first reading, the verbal difficulties which obstruct the path of a beginner, and the interest which the

subject of the book has for a proficient, preclude the possibility of attending to orthography, to idiomatic structure, or to elegancies of language. On a second or third perusal, familiarity with the matter, and rapid association of expressions and ideas, enable the reader to divide his attention and bestow part of it on the composition of words, their fitness, their arrangement, and all the niceties of style.

Some read much, either in their own or in a foreign language, who yet write very incorrectly, because they attend exclusively to the subject and never bestow a thought on the form of language: this fact is particularly illustrated as regards orthography. Having, at first, written from the sounds, or before the eye had been sufficiently impressed with the correct spelling, they have contracted erroneous habits, not easily to be reformed by the slight and transient impressions which words make on the visual organ, when the powers of the mind are, in the act of reading, exclusively directed to ideas. To retain the orthography, it is not enough to perceive; we must carefully observe the composition of words. The evanescence of impressions, when attention is otherwise engaged, has already been noticed. Bodily sensations, which might produce much pleasure or much pain, escape our consciousness when the mind is intensely engaged in other considerations. Of this insensibility, of this neglect of the objects of our sensations, or of this absence of mind, as it is called, many curious facts have been recorded, and many daily come within every person's experience. If, for example, we read a letter in which we are highly interested, attention being absorbed in the subject, we remain unconscious of the error of style, grammar, or orthography which it may contain. As a counterpart, correctors of the press, when intent on discovering orthographical errors in manuscripts or proof-sheets, scarcely know what are the ideas conveyed by the words on which their eyes and minds are fixed.

To be well impressed with the written language, the learner must particularly direct attention to its constituent elements, on a second perusal of the work, when familiarity with the words and their direct association with the ideas leaves the mind more at liberty. If this course be adopted, practice in reading will not only secure perfection in the power of understanding the written language, but will also assist in acquiring the art of composition, by exercising the eye and the powers of observation in noticing the orthography of the words, their inflections, and

syntactical arrangement. The habit of observation being once formed, the learner's progress in acquiring the materials of language will be rapid. Orthography, in particular, will present no difficulty; for, besides committing to memory verbs and other words through the medium of sight, the frequent recurrence of the same words in the course of reading, renders the eye an instinctive judge in spelling, as the educated ear is in pronunciation. If, for example, we are in doubt on the orthography of a native word, we have only to write it different ways, and the eye will generally decide at once which is correct.

Orthography and a stock of words will not be the only acquisitions, if the learner reads standard works more than once: taste will be refined and judgment improved. The consciousness arising from a first acquaintance with such works is usually obscure and confused; it is only on closer acquaintance with them that the mind acquires the power of perceiving the connection of the parts, the character of the whole, the fitness of style to thoughts, and all the beauties of composition, as well as the inaccuracies which have escaped the author. The repeated perusal of a work furnishes the surest means by which its literary merit can be ascertained; for productions of sterling worth afford new pleasures and unfold new beauties at each successive reading, whilst those of inferior character scarcely bear a second perusal; they exhibit more imperfections, as they are more frequently or attentively read.

If a person reads extensively and the same books more than once, he cannot see so many examples of the mechanism of language, without instinctively classifying in his mind the modes of speech which bear some analogy to each other, and without inferring from them the principles of their arrangement. Such is the human mind, that, as it collects facts, it combines and compares them, observes their relations and generalises them. Thus, not only are grammar and style simultaneously learned, but, while the student infers the theory of language from the practice, he exercises his reasoning and, especially, his inductive powers; whereas he can only exercise memory by recollecting rules, on perceiving illustrations of them, if he learns grammar previously to reading the foreign authors.

SECT. X.—OF READING AND WRITING AS MEANS OF RECOLLECTION.

So impressive is the reiterated perusal of a book, that many persons prefer it to writing, as a means of recollection. Johnson* and Gibbon are among the number. The latter says, "I must agree with Dr. Johnson, that what is twice read is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed." †

As this opinion, however, is opposed to a popular notion, we will quote a few other eminent men who have insisted on the inefficiency of writing as a mnemonic auxiliary. "There are," says the learned V. Knox, "many students who spend their days in extracting passages from authors, and fairly transcribing them in their common-place book; a mode of studying wretched, which seldom repays the student either with profit or pleasure. . . . . Nothing really serves in reading, but what the mind makes its own by reflection and memory. That which is transcribed is not in the least more appropriated than when it stood in the printed page. It is an error, if any suppose that, by the act of marking the words on paper with a pen, the ideas are more clearly marked on the brain than by attentive reading."‡ J. J. Rousseau, who, with all the great masters, advocates the frequent reading of the same works, tells us that, as soon as he had written anything, he was sure to forget it.§ "I have experienced many times," says also the author of "Paul and Virginia,"—"that we easily forget what we write. What I put on paper, I take from my memory and soon lose the recollection of it. This I perceived by entire works which I had written fairly, and which appeared to me as strange as if they had been written by a hand not my own."‖ Lord Byron, in alluding to his own written memorandums, observes, "I never look at a Mem. without seeing that I have remembered to forget." ¶ Dr. J. Abercrombie states, that he has known medical men who, having to recollect numerous appointments, never forgot them when they trusted to their memory: but continually blundered when they kept a written memorandum.** Lord Monboddo hesitates not to assert that the practice of writing, so far from

* *The Idler*, No. 74. † *Memoirs of my Life and Writings.*
‡ *Essays on Liberal Education.* § *Les Confessions*, Liv. 8.
Bernardin de St. Pierre, Etudes de la Nature. ¶ Th. Moore's *Life of Byron.*
** *On the Intellectual Powers.*

strengthening the memory, weakens it.* Plato and Quintilian, equally think that the use of writing injures the memory, "because," says the latter, "we take no trouble to retain what we have in writing."† Lycurgus forbade that his laws should be written, under the impression that they would be the better engraved in the hearts of the Lacedemonians.‡ For the same motive, the Druids confided only to memory their theological doctrines, while they used writing in their public and private transactions.

These observations on the inefficiency of transcribing, as an auxiliary to memory, apply more particularly to young persons, who, in copying, are apt to attend to the composition of the words as they write them one after another, without ever considering them collectively, or inquiring into the meaning of the phraseology; they hurry on to the end of their task, unconscious of the subject-matter, and, consequently, unable to derive from their labour any benefit beyond the acquisition of orthography. This fact is well illustrated in a French play, "L'Intérieur d'un bureau," in which a scrivener, being questioned on the subject of a writing he had transcribed, answered, "I know nothing of the matter; I only copied it, I did not read it."

Attentive and repeated reading will, in general, be found more profitable to learners, as it is more intellectual, than the laborious and uninteresting task of copying, to which they are too often subjected.

We may add here that, in taking notes of lectures, short-hand writing should be discouraged, lest the business of the lecture-room should degenerate into the mechanical operation of transferring merely to the student's portfolio, not to his memory or reflective powers, the information communicated.

* *Orig. and Progr. of Language.*

† *Instit. Orat.*, Lib. xi. Ch. 2.

‡ Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT TO READ.

SECT. I.—COURSE OF READING.

WE must now inquire what course of reading is best calculated to afford all that we have a right to expect from books. In this inquiry our remarks will principally apply to living languages; for their extensive and ever-increasing literature must, in the selecting of suitable works, cause great perplexity to the anxious students. With regard to the ancient classics, there can be no embarrassment in the choice, because they may, nearly all, answer the purposes for which Latin and Greek are learned; and, besides, the degree of excellence and usefulness of each is fully established.

In order completely to understand the literary compositions of a nation, to appreciate their merit and enter into their spirit, to read them with pleasure and profit, we must not only know the various acceptations of words and the idiomatical structure of the language, we must also be acquainted with the character and customs of the people, with their institutions, government, and historical records, their civilisation and literature; for, under all these influences, the minds of their writers have been formed, and their books written. An author, in matters relating to his own nation and his own time, supposes those for whom he writes acquainted with the public facts and local customs to which he alludes: the readers of another country and another age, who are ignorant of these facts and customs, find in books obscurity which must not be attributed to the language. Complete familiarity with these peculiar circumstances would assimilate us to the writers whose language we learn, would make us sympathise with them, and would enable us the more certainly to understand their works, as well as adopt their peculiar forms of expression, when using that language. Residing in the country, and living with and like the natives would be the most certain way of

imbibing all the ideas under the influence of which these works have been written, and of judging of them accurately; but if we are debarred from that advantage, we must seek in books the information we should obtain from the people, were we to live in their society.

In connection with the study of classical literature, ancient history and geography should be studied; modern works should be read, which, exhibiting the private and public life of the ancients, throw light on the numberless allusions made to it by the Greek and the Roman writers.*

The course of reading we would prescribe in a foreign living language for a person desirous of entering into the spirit of its authors and acquiring conversational powers in it, should consist of modern works descriptive of the country, the manners and habits of the people whose language he is learning, modern plays in prose founded on the incidents of ordinary life, narratives portraying the existing state of society, and the scenes of which are laid in the country itself, the history of the nation, particularly that of the last hundred years, the biography of its celebrated characters, critical works on its language and literature: to these we would add the periodicals which give the news of the day and record passing events in the political and literary world. Should the learner, afterwards, visit the country whose language he has studied through this course of reading, the train of ideas which association would call up in his mind at the sight of the localities would add considerable interest to the scenery, monuments, public institutions, customs, and social habits of the people. Who, that has read of Hannibal or Napoleon's passage over the Alps, can behold these stupendous natural barriers without increased emotion and pleasure?

The different species of composition above enumerated contain, as it were, the national characteristics of the people and the peculiarities of social intercourse. They furnish both the ideas and the expressions which enable us to enjoy and take a part in conversation. The power of familiar speaking and epistolary writing being the probable extent of what is required in using a foreign living language, learners must particularly study such works as will make them acquainted with a style suitable to this double object.

It is otherwise in classical instruction: the art of speaking

* Among such works, those which deserve particular notice are, *Les Voyages du Jeune Anacharsis en Grèce*, by J. J. Barthelemy; *Les Voyages de Polyclète, ou Lettres Romaines*, by Baron Théis; *Rome au Siècle d' Auguste*, by Ch. Dezobry.

Latin, were it desirable, could not be effectually aided by the study of standard works. Plautus and Terence, the only writers now extant who have transmitted to us the colloquial style of the Romans, present but a very limited range of subjects and expressions suitable to modern conversation; and their language, notwithstanding its correctness and elegance, is often objectionable, as being the vehicle of a corrupt morality. Classical instruction should chiefly propose to lead students to the highest powers of composition in their own language. They should be ambitious of emulating the great writers and orators of antiquity in grace, harmony, and majesty of style; they should, after the indispensable initiatory books, read and study none but such as are considered models in the various walks of classic literature.

But, in our enthusiasm for classical excellence, let us not forget that Christianity has extended and ennobled the objects of oratorical composition. Pagan eloquence, based on selfish motives, confined its theme to human passions, to things of this earth—the narrow circle of worldly interests,—whereas Christian eloquence, addressed to men of all nations and of all times, has its source in God, and takes for its theme heaven and immortality; it presents models most worthy of study and imitation. In a literary point of view, the sacred writers and orators of the early Church compete with those of Rome and Greece. None, perhaps, among the Greeks, surpass St. Augustin in energy of style and closeness of reasoning, Basil of Cesarea in boldness of imagery and grace of elocution, Gregory of Nazianzen in depth of thought and richness of expression, John Chrysostom in force, harmony, and pathos. The sublime beauties of the Scriptures, which were their text, leave far behind all that is most admirable in pagan antiquity. The ancient pagan models of eloquence, high as they stand, should not then exclusively engage the attention of Christian youth, many of whom are destined to be ministers of God and preachers of the Gospel. Sacred literature claims a portion of their time and their serious consideration.

When the proficiency of learners permits them to read in the foreign language historical works, treatises on different branches of knowledge, or standard works in oratory or poetry, they should, as much as is practicable, attend to the same branches of history, science, or literature in their own language. The same information acquired in two languages would be clearer, and better impressed on the mind, when presented in different points of view, by writers of different nations; while the merits of the

native and of the foreign authors, thus brought into juxtaposition, could be ascertained by critical investigations. This comparative course of reading would enable learners to understand better the foreign authors, and penetrate more deeply into the genius of the foreign idiom; it would elevate their minds, and make them conversant with the literature, arts, and sciences of the people whose language they study, at the same time that it would promote advancement in knowledge and cherish due regard for the national idiom.

In the commencement, we should guard against allowing too many obstacles in the way of young persons; the books should be rather below than above their age and understanding, that the difficulties arising from the matter may not turn their attention from the language, which is to them the principal object. Juvenile books would best answer for all classes of learners, as treating usually of familiar topics. Their colloquial style renders them also subservient to the acquisition of useful phraseology; for they are, as models, particularly well adapted to a person who, beginning to speak a foreign language, is necessarily limited to simple and familiar subjects. We are all children during our novitiate in the art of speaking a language.

Modern literatures, especially the English, the French, and the German, now abound in juvenile works which inculcate a pure morality, and may, consequently, become instrumental in confirming the lessons of virtue received in a pious and moral family. Many books can also be found, which contain useful information suited to the capacity of learners, and relating to the branches of instruction in which they may be engaged at the time. Judicious instructors may always recommend those which best supply the wants of their pupils, and suit their different degrees of proficiency. We would only observe that the time for dwelling on such works should be in inverse proportion to the age of the learners.*

In this respect, modern languages possess very great advantages; we can always adapt books to the ages or capacities of students. But the elevated character of ancient literature does not permit it to be brought down to the level of immature

* Among the best works of this class, in French, we may notice those of Bouilly, Pierre Blanchard, Réual, Mme. Guizot, Mme. Delafaye-Bréhier, Mme. de Renneville, Mlle. Ulliac-Tremadeure, Mmes. Tastu et Volart, and the *Journal des Enfants*, still in process of publication. Some of the works of Berquin, Florian, Mme. Campan, and Mme. de Genlis, although of older date, still hold a prominent rank in this class. [Note 22.]

minds ; it is, therefore, the understanding of the learner which, by proper delay, must be raised to the standard of the classics. Their elevation of thought and style admirably answers the ends proposed in literary pursuits ; for the learner does not seek in them, as in modern works, materials for conversing or writing in the languages in which they are composed, but rather uses them as means of disciplining his mind, forming his taste, enriching his imagination, and transfusing classical beauties into his native composition.

As modern languages offer every facility for conforming to one of the fundamental laws of instruction—gradation of difficulties —this principle should be strictly observed in reading. The student should venture only by slow steps on the higher order of composition. Without neglecting works of long established reputation, he should frequently indulge in the study of modern literature. Living languages undergo changes in the progress of civilisation ; the people who speak them impart to them their mobility and gradual improvement. The reader should keep pace with this progress, and make himself conversant with the new forms of language. (22.)

SECT. II.—OF THE HIGHER STANDARD WORKS.

The reading of standard works in the higher departments of literature must be postponed until familiarity has been gained with conversational style. Poetry, especially, must be avoided, at an early period of the study ; for its licenses, transpositions, and metaphors would then accumulate difficulties destructive of that rational gradation indicated by nature in the learning of every art, and fill the mind of the student with ideas and expressions unavailable in his first need of language for conversation.

In most languages, the style of prose differs materially from that of poetry, not only by its inversions, ellipses, and other licenses, but also by the use of a distinct class of words. This is so strikingly true of Italian, that, to the natives themselves, their best poets are not always intelligible. The style of Dante is so intricate, and his allusions so obscure, that, even in his own day, a professorship was established at Padua to explain his poems. Lord Chesterfield acknowledges that, although he knew Italian extremely well, he never could understand that poet. Alfieri asserts that not one in a thousand of the reading Italians

understands Dante or Petrarca.* Yet it is not uncommon to see, in the countries where Italian literature is cultivated, the works of these great poets in the hands of young persons who have barely translated half-a-dozen volumes of familiar Italian prose.

The impropriety of introducing the great Latin and Greek poets at an early period of the study is equally obvious; but that impropriety is greater still, when, as frequently happens, they are put in the hands of children under fourteen or fifteen. As a general rule, it may be observed, that a learner should read in the foreign language only such books as he could perfectly understand were they written in his own. But we need not now expatiate on this topic, having already adverted to it in Book IV., Chap. I., Sect. II. We will only add, in accordance with the opinions of Arnauld, Pluche, Batteux, and others, that Ovid's "Metamorphoses" and "Art of Love," from the immorality of the subjects, should be altogether expunged from the programme of scholastic reading.

The learner of a foreign language must read a considerable amount of prose before he enters on poetry, in order to be able to distinguish the differences of style which characterise these two species of composition, and thus to appreciate the merit of verse. The habitual reading of simple and correct prose will bring him, in the foreign language, to the same point at which he had arrived in his own, before he began to read his national standard works. It is by gradual steps that, in the native tongue, we are enabled to commune with superior minds. This gradation is equally indispensable in a foreign language; and the student must confine himself to colloquial prose, the longer as he has not the means of acquiring familiarity with it by mixing with the people. Let him, as he advances in years, in discernment, and in knowledge, take up the works of the great masters in prose and in poetry; and let him then attend to beauties of style and brilliancy of thought.

The old standard works are sometimes put into the hands of beginners, even of children. Injudicious as this practice is, it cannot be wondered at, when it is recollected that teachers of living languages generally enter on their profession accidentally. They, for the most part, think it prudent to adopt books sanctioned by ancient usage, or from the mere consideration of

* "Chi oramai in Italia, chi è che veramente e legga, e intenda, e gusti, e vivamente senta Dante e Petrarca? Uno in mille a dir molto."—*Life of Alfieri*, written by himself.

their acknowledged superiority, ignorant that what constitutes their merit is often precisely what renders them objectionable for a young learner: like highly seasoned food, which, from its very nature, is the most unwholesome for an infant.

Télémaque, for example, a beautiful and justly celebrated work, a real poem in harmonious prose, so generally adopted as a school-book in this country, is one of the most objectionable that could be given to beginners. It is too voluminous, and its characters and incidents are too numerous to form a connected plot in the mind of a child, or of any beginner; its matter is too grave, and its style too poetical, to furnish useful materials for conversation. It is one of the least idiomatic works in the French language, quite destitute of those genuine gallicisms which abound in the conversation of good society in France. Its lessons of wisdom and its figurative language must fatigue a young learner, necessarily incapable of understanding and appreciating them. He can neither be interested in, nor derive benefit from poring over this work for years, mutilating its elegant periods, and transforming them often into bad English. Really, we know not which to pity most, the author who is so ill-used, or the poor child who is doomed to such a task: very fortunate is the learner still, if he is not forced by a disciple of Jacotot to learn the book by rote. Who would think of giving to a child, for his first essays on the piano, the exquisite compositions of Mozart, or the scientific productions of Beethoven?

Children, ever ready to adhere to the letter rather than to the spirit of imaginative compositions above their level, might early imbibe false notions from premature use of this work. Unable to distinguish between mythological and Christian morality, they might receive a wrong bias from seeing, at the opening of the poem, a woman, disconsolate for the departure of her lover (a married man, too), fall in love, at a first interview, with the son of that very lover whom she so deeply regrets. These are not the notions with which an anxious parent would wish to familiarise the tender minds of his children.

Télémaque is a composition of too high an order to be properly understood by French youth under fifteen. It should be read by the foreign student only when the language is well known, as a reward for past exertions—as a highly intellectual treat. An adult alone, when a proficient in mental reading, could appreciate its moral tendency throughout, its beauty of style and soundness of thought. But few of those who use it as a school-book ever

finish it or desire to do so; if they persevered to the end, it would consume a considerable portion of the scholastic period; and, to the learner's great prejudice, little time would be left for perusing other works.

Gil Blas, a popular French classic, often introduced at an early period of the study, is equally objectionable. Its style, it is true, is more familiar than that of Télémaque; but not less injudicious is the selection of it as an initiatory book, or as a model of composition; for we must not confound the familiar and idiomatic expressions prevalent in the conversation of the well-educated with the low idioms with which this work abounds. In fact, one of the principal merits of Gil Blas consists in the perfect appropriateness of the language to the characters, who, being for the most part low and vicious, consistently use vulgarisms. It is an exact representation of the follies and vices of society: its moral, good in the whole, but bad in the details, might be appreciated by an adult, though not by a child. It is more voluminous still than Télémaque; its style is more difficult and its plot more intricate.

Charles XII., another favourite school-book among French teachers, as being probably "one of the finest pieces of history ever written," although less objectionable, does not fully answer the end proposed. Its subject, very instructive as the record of an eventful and interesting era, is lost to a person whose attention is absorbed in seeking words and arranging phrases. Were the learner inclined to attend to the information which it contains, he would be constantly thwarted in this object by the slow, interrupted, and imperfect translation unavoidable at the outset. As a source from which to draw useful phraseology, it is a complete failure; for people in general, and young girls in particular, have little to do with the military terms and political questions that abound in the work. That it is well written, as are all Voltaire's compositions, does not justify the use of it as a model book, because the severe and classical style of history is not the most suitable for familiar conversation, or epistolary correspondence.

The above-mentioned volumes, and all standard works in any foreign language, should be taken up by a learner only when, disengaged from the trammels of translation, he can associate ideas with words, and freely attend to the subject and the style; when, in fact, that language is read mentally as the native tongue. This, however, cannot be done until after having perused

many volumes; for it is obvious that a slight acquaintance is not sufficient to open the mind to all the charms in the higher species of the beautiful, whether in literary or artistical productions: the arbitrary forms of speech in language are capable of rousing lively and pleasing emotions only through that magic power of association which results from their intimate and reiterated connection with the thoughts they are intended to convey. Considerable practice alone can familiarise the student with the different acceptations of words and the delicate shades of meaning which distinguish expressions apparently synonymous, as also with idiomatic and figurative forms of speech,—acquaintance with all of which is indispensable to read a foreign language with perfect ease and critical discrimination. From the moment this proficiency is attained, close attention to the best poets, orators, historians, and philosophers will enable him to derive from their excellences that pleasure which is the first indication of cultivated taste in literary matters.

SECT. III.—THE COURSE OF READING DEPENDENT ON THE END PROPOSED.

It is a great error to suppose that one can be a scholar in any language after having translated five or six volumes in as many years. "If you wish to understand the language of Cicero perfectly, read much," says Radonvilliers.* "To know a language," observes Sir W. Jones, "we must read an infinite number of books written in it."†

If a person learning a modern language use its standard works as initiatory books, and confine his reading to a few, he will, after the period of study, preserve only painful recollection of them, and his knowledge of the language, on a par with what boys usually know of Latin and Greek on leaving school, will be inadequate to the practical purposes aimed at in living idioms. In these idioms, he who does not read a great deal, although he may mix with the people, can be acquainted only with the limited language of familiar conversation, which is not unfrequently very vulgar and incorrect. In fact, we cannot always rely on the example of oral expression; for, independently of the grammatical errors which are constantly committed in colloquial intercourse, a surprising number of words are misapplied as well as mispro-

* *De la Manière d'apprendre les Langues.* † *Lettre à Mr. A. du P.*

nounced, not only by the uneducated, but also by those who are otherwise well informed. Even in the best society, one has little chance of acquiring the classical terms belonging to scientific and literary subjects; rarely are these topics introduced in social intercourse. Frivolity is unfortunately the prevailing feature of fashionable conversation.

In the preceding Chapter, and when treating of the relative importance of the four branches (Book v., Chap. II.), we have unfolded the beneficial effects of reading as a means of treasuring up knowledge and language. But although these results are immediately connected, since the expression cannot exist independently of what it signifies, yet different courses of reading must be pursued as either is aimed at.

If knowledge be the end proposed, it will be best attained by confining attention to didactic works, which hold the first rank among useful productions. These, it is true, are not numerous; but they should be constantly and carefully read. Pliny's precept, "*non multa sed multum*" (not many but much), should be the student's motto; intensity rather than variety, the basis of his study.

But, if a student be desirous of understanding general and promiscuous conversation and taking part in it, he must read works on various subjects, that every term and form of speech may come within his observation. Extent and variety in reading are the conditions of success. The elements of all reasoning are not to be found fully and truly expressed in any one kind of study: he who wishes to make himself conversant with all the resources of reason and language must seek them in many books. If he be ambitious to obtain the *copia verborum*,—if he wish to extend his vocabulary beyond colloquial subjects, to speak with ease and elegance, to write with force and perspicuity, he must look chiefly to the style of his models and diligently study the great writers, who excel in the finish of their compositions. He who has not assiduously read the standard authors will remain all his life an inferior speaker and writer.

Words and phrases, to be long retained and to be available for the purposes of expression, must be deeply engraved in the mind, and have become habitual by the repetition arising from extensive reading, combined with practice in speaking and writing. Confining the learner to the perusal of a few volumes and of portions of works not only would deprive him of extensive acquaintance with words, but by continually presenting the

same in the same circumstances would prevent him from gaining thorough knowledge of all their acceptations. How absurd, then, are those methods which confine a learner to the reading of some childish story, scarcely twenty pages long! *

Practice in reading a foreign language must be as considerable and as diversified as the practice we have in hearing and reading the native tongue, if we wish to possess as extensive a stock of words in the one as in the other, and to retain them permanently. When, from reading as well as from hearing, accurate forms of speech have, by repetition, grown familiar to the mind, they become its property. Any deviation from these forms which we might afterwards meet would strike us as being incorrect. This consciousness of propriety, arising from a habit of correct impression received from good society and good books, is a practical conviction for which we cannot account, but which, nevertheless, is real information. On the frequency and the manner of reading, as well as on the sort of books, depend the acquisition of orthography, command of language, and formation of style.

It may be briefly stated, that reading works on various subjects will lead to *acquaintance* with a wide range of words, and will extend the power of comprehending the foreign language, either written or spoken: the more idiomatic the style and the more difficult the subject of the book, the greater will be the improvement of the learner in the first two branches. Reading the same works often, or many works on the same subject, will, by repetition of the same words and phrases, lead to a *knowledge* of these very words and phrases, and prepare the readers for speaking or writing on those subjects: the more simple the language and the more familiar the subject-matter of the book, the better will it serve as an introduction to the third and fourth branches, provided they avail themselves of the rapidity with which they comprehend the ideas to direct their attention to the expressions. Both these courses of reading, if assiduously persevered in, will be profitable in another point of view: the learners will acquire either greater diversity of information, or more profound knowledge of any particular subject, as they approach nearer to perfection in reading the foreign language.

* Robertson may be mentioned as one of those who have fallen into this error: far from urging the necessity of reading much, he most unwarrantably asserts that the story four or five pages long, on which the exercises of his method are based, contains all the mechanism of the English language, and may enable a learner to comprehend any English work. See introduction to *Nouveau Cours de Langue Anglaise*, published in Paris, 1841.

SECT. IV.—OF READING IN SCHOOLS.

Success in acquiring the art of reading is commensurate with the learners' powers of self-tuition and the energy with which they exert them. But their improvement must be much retarded, if they *prepare for their teacher*, as the school phrase is, only as much as he has time to hear them translate; for, in ordinary cases, the time which he can devote to each pupil and to this part of the instruction is, especially in large classes, very limited. This practice is one of the chief causes why boys, in general, take so long to learn so little of Latin and Greek. Yet, it must be admitted that more time may be devoted to the oral translation of these languages with the instructor than could be given to the translation of living languages; because the pupils have not, as in studying the latter, to attend in class to the various exercises indispensable for acquiring the spoken language. We will, in the next Book, explain the manner in which a class may be examined in translation without loss of time to any of its members, and so as to secure the attention of all, although they may read different parts of the same author, or even different authors, according to the diversity of their progress.

Young persons, if properly encouraged to voluntary reading, will cheerfully indulge in the exercise; for, of all the tasks which it is requisite to perform in learning a second language, reading is undoubtedly the easiest and least irksome. Whatever be the age of the learner, if the book is interesting and instructive, and adapted to his capacity and taste, he is fully repaid for his trouble; and coercion becomes unnecessary. Application and perseverance will carry him to the highest degree of skill in this branch. These moral faculties, properly directed, always triumph in the end. Newton and Buffon were wont to say they were indebted to them alone for all they had accomplished.

The slow mode of proceeding usually pursued cannot, however, be avoided, when learners are too young, or too indolent to be left to themselves—evils which unfortunately are very prevalent, owing to the ignorance or culpable carelessness of parents, who either anticipate the progress of nature, by imposing on their children intellectual labour above their strength, or neglect to train them early to the moral habits and mental activity on which their success at school depends. In any case, great credit is due to the professor who stimulates his pupils to continued efforts.

His principal aim should be to exercise the faculties of the young, to encourage their efforts, and point out the right road, rather than to impart actual information, which can be obtained at any time from books and experience. The great secret in education consists in exciting and directing the will: that system is the best, which elicits the greatest quantity of voluntary exertion from learners.

Let interest be once awakened in the pursuit, and there will be no need of imposing tasks on learners: application and industry will follow. Emulation also will be excited in a class; for there will always be some of its members who, anxious to improve, will devote time and attention to reading; others will be stimulated to exertion by witnessing what their fellow-learners have accomplished.

But, although an extensive range of reading in a foreign language ought to be encouraged, yet a hasty and unscholarlike mode of effecting it should, especially in the ancient languages, be most strenuously discountenanced, as prejudicial to mental discipline, which is the chief object of classical studies. To guard, therefore, against the evil consequences of a reading competition, in which young people, desirous to outdo their fellow-learners in quantity, might read carelessly and superficially, they should be occasionally requested to give, in their own language, sometimes orally, sometimes in writing, the substance of what they have read in the foreign author. This exercise of memory would accomplish several objects: it would prove that they have really read and understood what they state, would make them more careful in reading, from the consideration that they would have to report on it, would engrave on their minds the subject of their books, and would, finally, afford them effectual means of improvement in the native idiom, if their instructor were thoroughly conversant with its genius and elegancies. This mode of examination is suitable to every stage of the classical course, and is sufficient, consistently with the ends proposed from it; but it would not satisfy the exigencies of a living language, which it is desirable to speak; the learners ought then, as soon as they can make this language the vehicle of their thoughts, to use it in summing up the subject of their reading.

The importance of the matter, as well as the quantity which the students read in their private studies, increasing with their progress, their intellectual powers would be proportionably

exercised by vernacular summaries given of their reading. But of higher importance to them would be the facility and correctness of elocution in their own language, which they would thus acquire. This exercise would bring them one step nearer to extempore speaking than the practice of giving the substance of a passage read in the native tongue; because, in the latter case, they are assisted by the recollection of both expressions and ideas; but, in the former, they are given only the ideas, and must themselves provide expressions. We will explain, in the Book on Speaking, in what manner similar exercises may be performed in the foreign language.

The benefits of the course which we have now explained can be best felt by students able to read in the absence of an assistant; for their progress depends on their own industry, not on lessons from a teacher, who can be but of little service to them in mere translation or mental reading. To those who have only made their pupils proficients in the first branch, no other credit is due than that of having excited them to exertion; this, however, it must be admitted, is no inconsiderable merit in a teacher.

In this department of instruction, as in every other, it must never be forgotten that learners ought not to do with the instructor what they can do by themselves, that they may have time to do with him what they cannot do without him. When they read books suited to their understanding and proficiency, and containing proper explanations, they require little assistance; the teacher may then, in class, according to their age and the nature of the text-book, direct his attention chiefly to the subjects of instruction more particularly devolving on him, and which are detailed above. (See Sect. II. of this Chap.) But, that the less advanced learners in a class may not engross the time of the professor to the prejudice of the more advanced, and may, by due preparation, derive profit from his instruction, they should, in the interval of the lessons, be assisted by their more talented class-fellows. In large schools, those among the latter who are of an age to be trusted with delegated authority should be appointed as monitors, having, each, under his superintendence, one or more boys, according to the size of the class, and whose duty it would be to see that those who are committed to their care understand the construction and meaning of the foreign author, especially the portion to be analysed and commented upon in the assembled class. The more a learner

reads by himself, the better will he be able to aid those of his schoolfellows who are in need of assistance. If difficult passages occur which a monitor cannot explain, they should be submitted to the professor: thus, with the exception of these passages, there would be no necessity for his devoting time to the translation. The right of appeal to him would be sufficient security against misdemeanour on the part of the pupils, or partialities and errors on the part of the monitors. By the adoption of this plan, not only are slow learners duly assisted, but they become instrumental in the advancement of the quick learners, who improve themselves by teaching; while neither is, in class, neglected for the other by the teacher. We leave to our readers to contrast the moral consequences of the kindness and gratitude thus created between schoolfellows with the baneful effects of the fagging system introduced in some of the great schools of England.

In concluding the subject of reading, we cannot refrain from remarking that anxiety for improvement, or partiality to the foreign language, should not be carried so far as to induce learners to use, in their devotional exercises, prayer-books and bibles written in that language, so long as they do not read it mentally with as much facility as their own. This practice, not unfrequently adopted, is objectionable, because the consideration demanded by the words of a language but imperfectly known necessarily draws from higher contemplations the mind of the reader, who is thus led to pray with the lip rather than from the heart. Communion with the Supreme Being and the performance of religious duties should never be made subservient to worldly purposes.

BOOK IX.

SECOND BRANCH—HEARING.

"How many people injure themselves because they wish to speak before having learned to listen profitably. They think that study and practice are required for speaking, but not for hearing."—PLUTARCH.*

"Let Prosody be a living practice with which the study of language begins—not a dead theory with which it ends."—J. S. BLACKIE.†

CHAPTER I.

COMPREHENSION OF THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE.

SECT. I.—PREVAILING ERRORS RESPECTING THE POWER OF COMPREHENDING ORAL EXPRESSION.

THE exercises for acquiring the spoken language, which will be elucidated in this and the following Book, are chiefly applicable to living idioms, and particularly to the French, which, at the present time, is the great medium of intercourse between European nations.

We have already remarked that the four arts which constitute the essential subdivisions of the study of a language, are completely distinct one from the other, and that each requires special exercises for its attainment; yet the generality of persons who either teach or learn foreign languages, are under the impression that the power of speaking them implies that of understanding them when spoken, as occurs with the vernacular tongue. This prevalent error, by leaving out of the circle of studies the art of comprehending oral expression, is the primary cause of the general deficiency of learners in this department,

* *On the Art of Listening.*
† *On the Studying and Teaching of Languages.*

and of the consequent difficulty which they experience in acquiring the foreign pronunciation. The neglect to which this art is usually consigned in the teaching of foreign languages is such, that there is not even a term by which to express it; and, for the purpose of classification, we have been under the necessity of attaching this new acceptation to the words *hearing* and *audition*.

Teachers, in general, make their pupils read, instead of reading to them; they wait until they begin to speak the foreign language, before they address them in it. Many persons, on arriving in France, unused to hear French spoken, although proficients in reading it, are unable to understand the people. Some, not reflecting that the difficulty lies in the deficiency of their unpractised ear, attribute it to an extreme rapidity with which they imagine the French express themselves; others, to their running the words into one another; not a few declare, that the French spoken abroad is not the same as that of their teachers at home. If these are not natives of France, there may be some truth in the declaration; but if they are, there can be no reason for believing it probable. Were they even liable to the charge of ignorance, as it may often happen, yet they cannot but speak like their countrymen and contemporaries, unless they have forgotten their own language, a circumstance of rare occurrence.

The deficiency of learners in the Second Branch must not be attributed to a difficulty in the acquisition: it has already been observed, that it is incomparably easier to understand a language spoken than to speak it, as it is easier to understand books than to write. The capability of comprehending what is spoken would be as easily acquired in a foreign language as in the native, if the hearing faculty were as much exercised in the one as in the other. That some find it more difficult to understand a foreigner than speak his language can be attributed only to the method pursued, contrary to that of nature. Among the causes of error on this point, it may be stated that deficiency in speaking not preventing, in general, the speaker's meaning from being apprehended, leaves him often unconscious of his mistakes; whereas, in the act of hearing, a single word not understood suffices to mark the deficiency, and to render a whole sentence obscure. In speaking, people evade difficulty by giving utterance to the ideas alone for which they have words, and thus do not feel sensible of the scantiness of their verbal stock; but the

hearer, having no control over the language of those who address him, must be previously acquainted with nearly all, if not all, the words and forms of expression which may be used in conversation,—an ability to be attained by practice in reading and hearing. The illiterate portion of the community generally understand what is spoken as accurately as is desirable; whereas, from the difficulty of the art of speaking, they continue all their lives to express themselves very incorrectly; and, in conveying their limited and common-place ideas, they constantly misapply terms and violate the laws of language, without in the least suspecting the extent of their deficiency: they imagine themselves as skilful in the art of speaking as they really are in that of hearing.

The difficulty experienced by English people in comprehending French conversation may, if they have learned from natives, be attributed either to the nature of the volumes they have read and their limited number, or to the want of practice in hearing the language, and the consequent incapability of associating the ideas with the sounds as the words are uttered. The classical and narrow course of reading to which learners are usually confined in the study of living languages, and for which we have, in the preceding Book, suggested the remedy, does not acquaint them with the familiar terms and idiomatic forms of ordinary conversation; the consequence is that, when visiting foreign countries, they hear numerous expressions of which they are utterly ignorant. The other two causes of difficulty, which it is the object of the present Book to remove, are equally obvious,—the ear, untaught by the teacher's voice, cannot, in the usual rapidity of speech, recognise the foreign words, however familiar they may be to the eye; and the inability to think in the language renders the obstacle truly insurmountable. Instead of laying hold at once, in their native dress, of the ideas of the speaker, they endeavour to translate him, consuming thereby considerable time in substituting English words for the French, and in searching for corresponding idioms: thus they lose ground in following him, and arrive at the erroneous conclusion that the French speak more rapidly than the English.

SECT. II.—THE ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGES COMPARED AS REGARDS RAPIDITY OF UTTERANCE.

The extreme rapidity of thought naturally leads to rapidity of speech; and, in this, the English surpass, perhaps, every other nation. Voltaire shrewdly observed, that an Englishman gains every day two hours on a Frenchman in conversation. The truth is, that the English language is spoken considerably faster than the French. This results from a difference of genius in the pronunciation of the languages and the characters of the people.

Pronunciation is composed, as we have seen, of two elements—*vocal sounds* and *articulations*, represented in writing by *vowels* and *consonants*. Vocal sounds admit of duration—vocal articulations are produced instantaneously, and, with the exception of a few, cannot be dwelt upon. When a consonant is placed after a vowel, it generally shortens it. Thus the long syllables, *me, we, fi, no, due, though*, become short by adding consonants to them,—*met, web, well, fit, fig, not, knock, dun, dust, thought*. Now, in English, consonants predominate, and usually end syllables: hence, a rapidity of utterance is the unavoidable consequence.

In French, on the contrary, consonants act but a secondary part, and are often silent. The spoken words, in reality, end with vowel-sounds, although consonants terminate their written representatives. In the division of the words, consonants seldom terminate syllables: for example, the French word *caricature* is divided into syllables thus, *că-rī-că-tū-rĕ;* its pronunciation, conformably to this division, is necessarily longer than that of the English word, commonly pronounced according to this other division, *căr-ĭc-ă-tūre*. The same may be said of every other word in the two languages. The vowels, which contribute so much to lengthen the words, are pronounced full in French, as if every syllable were accented. From these facts, there necessarily results a steady and slow enunciation.

The difference in the rapidity of utterance of the English and French languages is rendered still more striking, when it is observed, that many of the French long sounds, especially the nasal and those marked in writing by the circumflex accent, have no existence in the English language; whilst the short and indistinct sounds, of which almost all unaccented syllables con-

sist in English, and which constitute the great bulk of its pronunciation, are some of them never, and the others very seldom, used in the French language. The shortest sound, for example, which the two languages have in common, (the sound represented by *a, e, i, o, u* in *dial, her, sir, word,* and *but*), is expressed in French only in two ways,—by the unaccented *e*, and the compound sign *eu*,—while it occurs, in English, under thirty different alphabetical forms. It is probably in reference to these unaccented syllables, that Milton observed, "We Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue, but are observed by all nations to speak exceedingly close and inward."*

"The best way," says Sheridan, "of seeing clearly the difference between the genius of the French tongue and ours, in this respect, will be to sound a number of words immediately borrowed from them, and see in what the diversity of pronunciation consists, such as *dŏctēur*, dŏctŏr; *ābāṇdŏn*, ăbăndŏn; *cŏmbāt*, cŏmbăt; *cŏllēge*, cŏllĕge; *cŏmp̣āgnŏn*, cŏmpănĭŏn; *Ēŭrōpe*, Ĕŭrōpe; *ŏbstācle*, ŏbstăcle; *sŏlīde*, sŏlĭd, &c.; in most of which words the syllables are all long in the French, and short in the English, as the accents are placed on the vowels in the French, and on the consonants in the English. This it is which makes most of their words appear to an English ear to have as many accents as syllables, by obliging them to give an equal stress to them. And this would be our case also, even with the short sound of the vowels, if we were to rest an equal time upon each syllable as they do."†

To the testimony of Sheridan, we will add that of a celebrated critic, Hugh Blair: "We incline, in general," he says, "to a short pronunciation of our words, and have shortened the quantity of most of those which we borrow from the Latin. . . . In English, we have many words accented on the fourth, some on the fifth syllable from the end, as *mem'orable, am'bulatory, prof'itableness.* The general effect of this practice of hastening the accent, or placing it so near the beginning of the word, is to give a brisk and a spirited, but, at the same time, a rapid and hurried, and not very musical tone to the whole pronunciation of a people."‡ "Such is the vehemence of our accent," observes also Lord Monboddo, "that every syllable which follows the accented, is not only short, but almost lost in the pronun-

* *On Education, by Sam Hartlib.* † *Lectures on Elocution.*
‡ *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres.*

ciation."* The opposite habits of utterance of the French and the English, as proved by these facts, are rendered strikingly obvious by the respective errors of pronunciation which the natives of the two countries are apt to commit when speaking each other's language: the English most generally err by pronouncing the French words too short, and the French by pronouncing the English words too long.

This difference in the mode of utterance arises from a corresponding difference in the national dispositions. As activity characterises northern, and indolence southern nations, so the English, despite their old reputation for much phlegm, are more hasty in decision and more energetic in action than the French. This may be seen in all their undertakings, private and public,—in their meals, their modes of travelling, and their national dances; but it is particularly illustrated in their oratorical and dramatical as well as colloquial delivery. It is this natural hastiness of disposition which has also caused the innumerable ellipses and contractions which so much disfigure the English language and make it incomparably more elliptical, both in construction and pronunciation, than any other with which we are acquainted. Besides the indistinctness and rapidity of its unaccented syllables, already adverted to, it admits, in familiar conversation, as well as in poetry, of numberless contractions, which would not be tolerated in other languages. The only licence of this kind allowed in speaking French is the omission of the unaccented *e*, when three vocal articulations are not thereby left together; in poetry *encore* is the only word in which a letter, the final *e*, may be dropped.

The English have so strong a propensity for hurrying in their speech, that they contract words of all kinds, even proper names, a practice quite unknown among their continental neighbours. How ridiculously short are the familiar contractions, *'tis, isn't, I'll, don't, sha'n't, you'd*, &c.; *mam, gent, bus, pos, on spec, incog, a middy, an M.P.*, &c.; the christian names, *Bill, Dick, Joe, Bess, Mag, Kate*, &c.; and other proper names such as *Chomly, Lester, Notts, Bucks*, &c. for *Cholmondeley, Leicester, Nottinghamshire, Buckinghamshire*, &c. Besides these accidental contractions, the English language contains more monosyllables than the generality of other languages, a circumstance which again tends considerably to shorten the expression of thought. "Such, in Britain, is the propensity for dispatch," says Lord Kames, "that,

* *Origin and Progress of Language.*

overlooking the majesty of words composed of many syllables aptly connected, the prevailing taste is to shorten words, even at the expense of making them disagreeable to the ear and harsh in the pronunciation."* Among words of this kind may be mentioned, *learned, cursed, scratched,* &c.; *boatswain, cockswain, victualler,* &c., pronounced *learnt, curst, scratcht, bos'n, cocks'n, vitler,* &c. "It must be regretted," says Walker, "that contraction subjects our tongue to some of the most hissing, snapping, clashing, grinding sounds, that ever grated the ears of a Vandal."† "Our rational conversation," says also Bulwer, "is for the most part carried on in a series of the most extraordinary and rugged abbreviations, a species of short-hand talking."‡

Shakspeare well knew that rapidity was the predominant feature of English delivery. Hamlet says to the player, "Speak the speech I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lieve the town-crier had spoke my lines."§ Sheridan explains Shakspeare's meaning in these terms: "By *trippingly on the tongue,* he means, the bounding from accent to accent, tripping along from word to word, without resting on syllables by the way; and by *mouthing,* is meant, dwelling upon syllables that have no accent, and ought therefore to be uttered as quickly as is consistent with distinct articulation; or prolonging the sounds of the accented syllables beyond their due proportion of time."‖

It is not, then, a fact, that the French speak faster than the English; nor do they blend their words more than any other people: in all languages words that are connected in the sense must be closely joined in pronunciation. But, were even French spoken faster than other languages, it ought to be the business of the teacher to make his pupils get through the difficulty of understanding it; and, indeed, this second Branch is one of the few departments of the study for which his assistance is indispensable. On his exertion and good management greatly depends their proficiency in it and in the consequent acquisition of the pronunciation.

* *Elements of Criticism.* † *Principles of English Pronunciation.*
‡ *England and the English.* § *Hamlet.* ‖ *Lectures on Elocution.*

SECT. III.—EXERCISES IN HEARING IN IMITATION OF THE PROCESS OF NATURE.

Before we proceed to explain the process by which comprehension of the spoken language may keep pace with that of the written, and by which also the pronunciation may soon be rendered as familiar to the learner's ear as the spelling to his eye, we will recall the model-method by which nature leads so successfully to the acquisition of the second branch in the native tongue.

In the vernacular language a child hears for a long time before he articulates; he is spoken to and understands long before he speaks. The Creator has wisely denied him the power of articulation at his entrance upon life, that he may not be diverted by premature talking from collecting ideas and materials of expression; thus, he silently listens, observes, compares, and stores his mind with associations of ideas and words, which will enable him to give utterance to his first feelings, when his organs of speech are able to perform their office, and when the determinations of the will can be directed to the formation of vocal articulations. He first notices the words and phraseology which his mother, or his nurse, constantly addresses to him, and to which he could attach no ideas, did he not, at the same time, follow the looks and gestures with which she invariably accompanies them. These looks and gestures are the translation of what he hears. His eye is the interpreter of his ear, and assists his young imagination in divining her meaning. When the frequent iteration of words, concurrently with the interpreting signs, has familiarised him with their import, he enters on the second stage in hearing; he understands every person who addresses him without requiring the assistance of the language of action.

By the time this second point has been attained, his organs of speech have undergone some development, and have acquired the power of producing the vocal sounds and articulations which have become familiar to his ear. After having listened for two or three years, and when he is beginning to understand the oral expression, he attempts, under the irresistible influence of imitation, to utter the simplest and most frequently repeated words and phrases; and, if he has the good fortune of being brought up

in a family the members of which speak correctly, he will, in the course of time, acquire a perfectly pure pronunciation and accent.

Nature, by postponing the power of articulation until after the powers of hearing and comprehending the language have been in full activity, sufficiently indicates the progressive order which should be followed in acquiring the arts of understanding and speaking a foreign language.

In a former Book, we have stated that the professor should, at the outset, form, in the foreign language, with the verbs and the other words learned by his pupils, various analogous combinations, which may serve them as models of pronunciation and phraseology: this practice, if frequently resorted to, will not only assist them in speaking the foreign idiom as they learn to speak the native, but will also initiate them into the art of comprehending oral expression. However, as detached sentences would prove insufficient for enabling learners to understand rapid conversation or continuous discourse, we will now explain another mode of proceeding, which is equally in accordance with the natural method, and by which may be gained complete mastery of this most important department of a foreign language.

A passage of a foreign author being selected every day by the professor from what has been previously studied by the learners, he distinctly reads it aloud to them in short phrases of three or four words at a time, which they alternately translate. These translations are for them what the looks and gestures accompanying the native words are for the infant. They also serve to indicate whether the pupils have prepared, or whether they understand what they have read.

The whole passage is read a second time without interruption, to give the learners an opportunity of mentally following the sense by associating the articulate words with the ideas they represent. This second reading corresponds to what takes place in the natural process when, at about the age of two, the child being acquainted with many words, and becoming independent of the language of action, begins to listen eagerly to connected familiar discourse and to oft-told nursery tales.

When, through these two modes of reading, learners have made some progress in comprehending the spoken words, they should more particularly attend to the delivery: for this purpose, the professor reads each passage a third time in small portions, which they repeat in succession, endeavouring to imitate the pronunciation, accent, and blending of the words of

their living model. Here, the order and progress of nature are again closely followed; for it is only when the sounds and meanings of words have, by repetition, grown familiar to the child, that he begins to pronounce them. But of this third reading we shall speak more at length when treating of pronunciation.

It is finally read a fourth time by the professor with elocutional accuracy, that the learners may attend simultaneously to the sense, the sound, and the accentuation, and thus acquire, under the influence of reiterated impressions, not only the power of understanding the people who speak the language, but also a pure pronunciation and graceful delivery. This fourth reading answers to the last stage of a child's progress in acquiring the precious faculty of understanding his fellow-creatures: in the family circle, at every hour of the day, he hears his parents and all those he is most interested in comprehending, and unconsciously adopts their pronunciation, their accent, their words, and their sentiments.

The first reading by fragments for oral translation, and the third for imitating the pronunciation, have this great advantage in a class, that they not only engage the uninterrupted attention of all its members, but give to the instructor the opportunity to proportion the difficulty of the exercise to their different degrees of proficiency. If the passage selected for reading to the learners be the last prepared by the least advanced, the latter is assisted in translating by his recollection of it: whilst the most advanced, who has not read it for some time previously, is deprived of this assistance, and must depend on his knowledge of the language more than on his recollection of the passage. The portions, or phrases, read for translation, or for pronunciation, may also be shorter or longer, more slowly or rapidly uttered, consistently with the proficiency of the pupils.

The method of reading to learners and exercising them in the pronunciation suits all ages, and public classes as well as private instruction; for, in mere imitation and repetition, the child and the adult are on a par, since the organs of sense, which then are alone engaged, are equally developed in both. But, in the acquirements which depend on the intellectual powers, the differences of capacity and previous knowledge should be taken into account in the mode of proceeding.

Of the four readings just adverted to, the first, by which learners are examined in the translation of a foreign author,

is that which presents the prospect of most usefulness in the teaching of Latin; because the acquisition of its pronunciation does not demand that the same passage be heard frequently from an instructor, owing to its similarity with the national pronunciation of every country; nor is the power of understanding Latin, when spoken by fellow-countrymen, likely to be needed; it surely could not be used in preference to the native idiom in oral communication at home. Were it desirable, it could only be for conversing with foreigners; but, for this purpose, a teacher should possess a knowledge of many living languages, to be able to familiarise his pupils with the various ways in which Latin is pronounced. One of the Scaligers, being one day addressed in Latin by a Scotchman, excused himself as not knowing Scotch, thinking he was addressed in the latter dialect.

It is different with Greek, which may, in every respect, be treated as a modern idiom; because the Greeks, having of late shaken off the yoke of their oppressors, have sought to purify from disgraceful alloy the language of Homer and Xenophon; and, at the present day, the literary men and upper classes of society in Greece generally use it in its primitive purity, to the exclusion of the Romaic. In fact, the continued study of the ancient authors by the learned Byzantines, and their habits of composition in Hellenic, have always been obstacles to the improvement of the vulgar language; although the Romaic has been spoken for many centuries, it became a written language only towards the beginning of the eighteenth century; as yet it does not boast any original production or work of genius, which can be referred to as a standard of taste or style.

The time which, in learning a living language, is divided between the various exercises requisite for speaking and writing it, should, in the study of Latin, be chiefly devoted to the explanation of its classics, a circumstance consistent with the difficulty of construing and translating it, and with the objects chiefly proposed from the study of ancient literature. The professor, when reading to his pupils for oral translation, may, at times, comment on such expressions as he thinks will elicit useful information respecting the language or the thoughts; at other times he may desire the learners to re-translate *viva voce* into Latin, first, the words, then, the phrases which they have previously translated. The decomposition of the foreign phraseology through the analytical exercise of translation prepares

them for recomposition into it with the same elements and conformably to the model just impressed on their minds. The teacher, guided by the original in his hand, can always not only correct errors with perfect ease and accuracy, but he has also an opportunity of varying the phrases, and thus familiarising his pupils with the Latin construction. We will, in the two following Books, explain, at some length, the manner of exercising learners in the foreign phraseology.

SECT. IV.—MODE OF ACQUIRING THE POWER OF COMPREHENDING THE SPOKEN LANGUAGE.—MENTAL AUDITION.

Let us now examine the exercise in hearing in reference to its first object, namely, the power of comprehending a foreign language when spoken; we will subsequently consider it as a means of acquiring the pronunciation and accent.

In teaching a foreign living tongue, a professor should always make his pupils translate the original text from hearing him read, and not from looking in the book. In his absence they exercise their eyes in learning the written language, and, in his presence, their ears, in learning the spoken language. Perplexed, as learners must be, at first, by the novelty of the pronunciation, although assisted by their recollection of the passage, having previously read it, they will often only guess the meaning of the articulate words; but their repeated guesses will shortly be changed into certainty, when, by practice, the sounds have grown familiar, as occurs with an infant acquiring this part of the native tongue, or a person learning a foreign idiom abroad. As the pupils advance, the instructor proportions the difficulty of the exercise to their proficiency by gradually increasing the length of the fragments which he reads to be translated by them. He will also afford them greater scope for exertion, and render this exercise more conducive to the end proposed, by selecting the passages so that a progressively longer time may have elapsed between their studying and his reading them, until, finally, they translate from hearing what they have not previously read.

But, as the chief object in attending to conversation is, to apprehend the ideas consecutively and independently of translation, the first mode of reading, in which the pupils translate phrase by phrase, should be dispensed with as soon as the sounds are sufficiently familiar to enable them at once to recognise the

words and know their meanings. A very short time may suffice for attaining this point, if, by previous translation, they have gained some acquaintance with the written language. This alternate reading and translating being laid aside, and the time consumed by it being devoted to the second or continuous reading, the pupils will have more practice in hearing the language: they at first translate mentally, as the instructor slowly reads, until greater familiarity with the spoken language enables them to dispense altogether with translating. The third reading by short phrases, for the learner's imitation of the pronunciation, should also be omitted, whenever their exclusive object is to understand what is said in the foreign language; and the uninterrupted reading be gradually lengthened as it assumes a greater degree of importance by reason of their advancement.

In this exercise, the pupils should forbear looking at what is read to them, that the ideas may be exclusively received through the articulate words, as when listening to a speaker. If a person, familiar with the written language, had his eye fixed on the book while the instructor was reading, that organ, being quicker than the ear and not easily controlled, would not always patiently accompany the reader word for word, but would outstrip the ear in apprehending the subject. Sometimes also a person less advanced, will be slow in following the teacher, or will stop to consider the words which are not familiar to him, so that, in either case, the learner would be unmindful of what is read. As he would no longer depend on the sounds for the sense, the great object of this exercise would be defeated;—the ideas would be apprehended through the eye, not through the ear.

The hearer, also, occasionally perceiving letters which are not pronounced, would be apt to attribute his not hearing them to inattention or dulness of hearing on his part, and might still be inclined to introduce them in his pronunciation afterwards. It is, therefore, better not to give the eye an opportunity of leading the ear astray. Besides, the habit of employing sight to render what is heard intelligible, incapacitates the ear for conversation, in which it can have no assistance from the eye. Here again, as in every other exercise, the means must be suitable to the end.

In the beginning, the intensity of attention required to seize the sense and the sound would soon fatigue the inexperienced hearer: the exercise should not, consequently, be continued long, but may be resumed after the attention has been engaged

by something else. This alternation of exercises should take place the oftener, as the learner is less advanced. In intellectual pursuits, change of occupation is, in most cases, sufficient relaxation.

The passage read continuously at each sitting, should gradually become longer, as the pupils' proficiency enables them to comprehend more easily what they hear; for the attention required being less intense, they are able to prolong it, and with less fatigue. The interest with which a skilful instructor may invest this exercise, by the choice of subjects likely to excite curiosity, and by his manner of delivery, will considerably contribute to fix the attention; and the more effectively, if the subjects selected for reading blend amusement with instruction, if, especially, they be new, congenial with the tastes, and adapted to the capacities of the hearers. The pupils, on their part, should be careful to stop him at every word which they do not at once recognise, that it may be explained. The frequency or rarity of interruptions indicates to the teacher the pace suited to their progress.

The practice of reading to learners must, in general, be preferable to speaking; for, if the instructor attempt to converse with them, or to express anything in the foreign language beyond a few common-place ideas, before they are so familiarised with its phraseology as to understand easily what is said, the interruptions will be so many obstacles to the treating of a subject connectedly. He will be constantly thwarted and prevented from giving way to the natural effusions of his mind by the slowness of utterance which, contrary to his habitual delivery, he is forced to adopt. His train of ideas being frequently broken, he cannot proceed; whereas, with a book in hand, he can always adapt the slowness of his delivery to the inexperience of the hearers, while he can, after each interruption, resume his reading where he left it off. Conversation, as an exercise in hearing, can, at best, be profitable only to the person spoken to, but reading extends its benefit to a large auditory. Moreover, reading renders improvement in understanding the spoken language independent of the conversational powers of the teacher, who may be very deficient in that respect: it preserves learners from hearing careless or defective phraseology. In addressing beginners in a foreign language, it often happens that an instructor, over-anxious to assist them in understanding him, avoids forms of speech which might

present difficulties to them, and conforms his expression to their native idiom, so as, sometimes even, to speak incorrectly; but, if he reads a good author for them, every chance of their receiving erroneous impressions, is guarded against. Books will also familiarise learners with a greater diversity of subjects, and consequently of expressions, than can be heard in a *tête-à-tête* conversation with a teacher, especially when they do not as yet possess sufficient command of the foreign language to enable them to venture beyond familiar topics. It will be seen, in the following Book, that conversation is equally unsuitable for initiating learners into the art of speaking.

The better to fix the attention of learners, and to ascertain that they understand what they hear, as also to accustom them to report a discourse, and, thereby cultivate their powers of oral expression in the national language, they should be required to give, in their own words, the substance of what has been read to them, an exercise of memory similar to that which is suggested in CHAP. III. SECT. IV. of the foregoing Book. For this purpose, the teacher should, at first, read short and interesting anecdotes or historical facts; and, as they improve in their delivery, the difficulty of the exercise should be increased by the length and the seriousness of the matter. As a further step in their progress, they should use the foreign idiom in delivering these summaries, when they have gained in it some facility of expression. Alternately to hear and speak, by making the example and the imitation follow in rapid succession, will enable learners easily to adopt the phraseology of their author and the pronunciation of their instructor.

When the students are familiarised with the foreign pronunciation, and have made some progress in mental reading, they will soon dispense with translation in hearing, if, while listening to their instructor, they mentally repeat the words as he utters them. The power of understanding oral language by immediate association of ideas with articulate signs is the second stage in *mental language*, and what we shall call *mental audition*. It is more necessary still than *mental reading*: it is absolutely indispensable; for the hearer has not, like the reader, the option of dwelling on an expression, if he wishes to translate it; he must apprehend the ideas of the speaker as rapidly as they are delivered. We can follow conversation only when the sounds directly awake the ideas.

The professor should read progressively quicker, to prevent

his pupils from translating, and to secure for them the power of following the conversation of all classes of people, those who speak rapidly and indistinctly as well as those who speak slowly and correctly. Perfection in the second branch evidently consists in being able to understand any person conversing on any subject, with any degree of rapidity, as deciphering the worst handwriting and the most defective spelling is the test of excellence in the art of reading manuscripts. To attain this point, the teacher should not only impart rapidity to his delivery, but should also occasionally resort to compositions more intricate in style, especially to poetry, as affording less facilities for translation.

As an intermediate step to the intricacies of conversation, we would suggest to the instructor to relate to his pupils, in the foreign language, stories, anecdotes, or every-day occurrences, which might interest them; and, in order to lead them with more certainty to the power of conceiving ideas instantaneously on hearing the words, he should occasionally indulge in the delivery of poetical pieces, in humorous narratives, and that species of wit which arises from the different meanings of words, or other peculiarities of expression. The language of such subjects being, by its nature, untranslatable, could not fail to advance the learners in mental audition. It is very desirable that a teacher should possess the happy talent of story-telling: from the eagerness of youth for narratives, he has then at his command a powerful instrument with which he can easily fix attention and make instruction agreeable. Should he not be provided with a large stock of anecdotes, the same, if good, may be told several times: such repetitions, less wearisome to children than to adults, are, under any circumstance, conducive to the proposed object. The stories should at first be short, although their length is not objectionable, if they are interesting, and are adapted to the understanding of the hearers. Reading, although supplying, in great measure, the place of extemporaneous narrations, does not preclude them; for the gifted narrator has over the reader the advantage of exercising incalculable influence over the hearts as well as the minds of his pupils.

The progress of learners in understanding the spoken language will be in proportion to their proficiency in mental reading; for the words which, in books, recall directly their ideas, must soon, when spoken, produce the same effect; but if

they are not clearly understood in their written form, more unintelligible still must they be when heard, as the foreign pronunciation then adds to the difficulty. On the other hand, the words being, in mental reading, glanced over much more rapidly than they can be spoken, he who is a proficient in the first acquisition, will find mental audition comparatively easy. Hence we have further proof of the great importance of the first branch.

A person visiting a foreign country and having but little intercourse with its inhabitants, as is often the case, would, nevertheless, if able to read their language, have great facilities for acquiring the power of understanding them and of imitating their pronunciation:—a servant, a child, any native of that country, in fact, who knows how to read, could rapidly forward him in this twofold acquirement.

The spoken Italian, Spanish, and German, would soon be familiar to a person conversant with their written form, because each letter being invariably pronounced the same way in the same circumstances, he will easily recognise the words in their articulate form, and, consequently, understand the people. But, of all languages, the most difficult, perhaps, to be understood by foreigners, when spoken, is the English, in consequence of this double anomaly, that the same sounds are represented variously, and the same letters stand for different vocal elements; in consequence also of its rapid utterance, ever-changing accents, innumerable contractions, and the indistinctness of its unaccented syllables. A foreigner needs to hear it for a long time, before he can attain the double acquirement expected from this exercise.

SECT. V.—BENEFITS OF MENTAL AUDITION.

When, after great practice in hearing, learners understand what is read or narrated with rapidity and without translating, they are, in respect to this branch, on a par with those whose language they have learned: they can enjoy all the advantages of social intercourse with them, if even they are unable to speak the foreign language; because, as was before observed, the benefits of social intercourse consist in receiving, much more than in communicating ideas; and the means of conversing with each other is secured by the natives of different countries, when they understand, although unable to speak, one another's language.

The art of following ordinary conversation presents no difficulty to a person who understands the language on hearing it read; for people usually introduce in their familiar discourse subjects and words more simple and familiar than those of books; they repeat often the same expressions, and accompany their words with tones, looks, and gestures, which greatly assist the hearer. The mind is kept alive by the ever-varying topics, and relieved by the successive interruptions of colloquial intercourse. The person spoken to is also more attentive, because he feels more interested in that which is personally addressed to him, and suits his particular circumstances. This truth is forcibly illustrated by the well-known fact, that, in public assemblies, extemporaneous speeches are much more favourably received than written discourses.

The professor should now put to the test the proficiency of his pupils in hearing, by always addressing them in the foreign language. The frequent practice of following a train of ideas through the medium of words spoken by a native, will render the audible signs so familiar as soon to secure the habit of mental audition; and this once attained, the learners should be made to derive from it the same advantages which we all obtain from this acquirement in the vernacular tongue. The professor should often address them in the foreign language on various subjects of instruction. These subjects should be selected in reference to the studies in which they are engaged at the time, and more particularly to the higher departments of the language in which they are addressed: he may treat of its genius and comparative merit, investigate its origin, rise, and progress, unfold its importance as a means of social communication, or as a store of information, comment critically on its best works, and examine its literature, considered either absolutely or relatively to the national literature of the learners. Should the professor feel diffident in extemporaneous delivery, he may either prepare discourses to read to his pupils, or deliver to them from the most eminent writers in that language passages which would enrich their minds with useful knowledge and familiarise them with a pure and elegant style.

In colleges and schools, in which classes have, through the process above detailed, completely mastered the art of understanding a foreign language when spoken, lectures on the most useful branches of knowledge could be delivered in that language by eminent professors, who might be induced to come over yearly

for the purpose. France, Italy, and Germany send hither their singers and dancers, because there is a demand for the frivolities in which they excel; and enormous sums are paid to those who thus speculate on the taste of the nation for such amusements: if there were an equal demand for intellectual acquirements, it would be no difficult matter to find, in the above-named countries, men of superior talent and knowledge in the various walks of literature and science, who could make valuable additions to the information imparted in the public schools of these realms.

This is no utopian suggestion. Already the members of the British Association have been afforded frequent opportunities of hearing distinguished foreigners. The French, the Belgians, and the Germans had lately similar opportunities of hearing the English language, when the English and American members of the Peace Congress addressed them in Paris, Brussels, and Frankfort, in the great cause of humanity which is the characteristic feature of modern days. That the advantage of hearing the scientific or literary celebrities of neighbouring countries may be rendered more general is obvious: it will be realised by collecting auditories capable of understanding the foreign language when spoken, and by inducing learned professors to pay occasional visits to this country. The first point presents no difficulty, particularly as regards the French language, which is learned very extensively, and the oral expression of which could, in a few months,—nay, in a few weeks, by the method above detailed, be rendered completely intelligible to those who can read it. The opposite course, the foreigner lecturing to the people in their own language—would, in most cases, be impracticable: for an eminent professor, having gained his information by long study at home, cannot be expected to speak and pronounce the language of a people among whom he probably never resided, so as to be able to make it the extemporaneous vehicle of his thoughts in public.

The occasional visits of foreign lecturers to this country would be greatly facilitated by the present rapidity and cheapness of steam communication. English and Scotch professors often go to deliver courses of lectures in Ireland, which is farther from England than either Paris or Brussels. If the great academic institutions would procure for their students the double advantage of acquiring useful knowledge and of improving in the foreign language, they would be enabled to offer to the

foreign professors adequate remuneration. We do not see why they should not be patronised by an enlightened public, when French actors perform here, every season, to crowded auditories, who appear to comprehend them perfectly; unless it be proved, that the British nation is incapable of listening to anything serious or useful. Should English lecturers of repute pay professional visits to France, they would, we doubt not, meet with a proper reception.

Without expatiating on the many advantages which, in a moral, intellectual, and social point of view, would accrue to the two people, from this exchange of information and good offices, we will observe, as regards the present object, that the public discourses of these distinguished foreigners, and their private conversation, while in the enjoyment of British hospitality, would keep up and extend the practical knowledge of their language among those with whom they would associate. Persons who understand the foreign language spoken as they do their own, improve in their power of conversation in the one as in the other.

When once the language is perfectly understood, practice in hearing it affords the means of making rapid progress in the pronunciation and phraseology; for the mind of the hearer, quicker in conceiving the ideas than the tongue of the speaker in giving utterance to them, has leisure to attend to the manner as well as to the matter. So, in the vernacular tongue, we understand what is said with so much ease to ourselves, that we can even, while following the ideas of the speaker, spare part of our attention, and bestow it on the elements of expression, mentally noticing his phraseology and peculiarities of pronunciation, accent, or style, either to imitate or to criticise them, as the case may be.

Practice in mental audition will so closely connect in the mind the true sounds of the words with their corresponding ideas, as to cause them, in virtue of the laws of association and habit, to be easily reproduced, when the hearer has afterwards the same ideas to convey; and thus will he be enabled to express himself in the foreign language with a pure pronunciation, and without the intervention of translation.

CHAPTER II.

PRONUNCIATION.

SECT. I.—OF A GOOD PRONUNCIATION AND ACCENT.

IN modern languages, pronunciation is of the utmost importance; it contributes, in great measure, to their clearness, agreeableness, and energy. As correct enunciation renders our ideas more manifest, and causes us to be listened to with more pleasure, so an incorrect pronunciation, by its ambiguity and confusion, soon fatigues the hearers, and often exposes a speaker to ridicule. In a foreign, as in the native tongue, men are oftener led by their ears than by their understandings. "The way to their hearts is through their senses," says Lord Chesterfield; "please their eyes and their ears, and the work is half done. I have frequently known a man's fortune decided by his first address." *

Approximation is not sufficient in pronouncing a language, for the least deviation from the right sound or articulation,—the improper lengthening or shortening of a syllable, the omission or misplacing of an accent,—is enough to change the meaning of a word and to diffuse obscurity over the discourse. But, should even the mode of pronouncing not be so defective as to prevent the oral expression from being understood, learners, at whatever age they study a language, ought not to be satisfied with being merely intelligible. It has come within the experience of many persons that the pronunciation of a foreigner may be very intelligible and yet very disagreeable. No one who ever witnessed the force of sensible remarks nullified, although understood, by the amusement or impatience which a bad pronunciation usually excites, would deliberately make up his mind to address foreigners in their own idiom with an incorrect pronunciation.

It has been erroneously supposed impossible to acquire the

* *Letters to his Son.* Let. 154.

true pronunciation of a foreign language. Nature opposes no obstacle to it; men of all nations have been endowed with the same faculties, physical and intellectual, which place human attainments within the reach of all. We feel no hesitation in maintaining that, even without going abroad, the correct pronunciation of a foreign language is attainable by any person who will follow the process of nature in learning it. Although, at an early age, the physical senses yield more easily to impressions, this advantage is, in adults, counterbalanced by a greater intensity of attention, which renders the foreign pronunciation equally attainable by them. Experience daily affords instances of persons who pronounce a foreign language as correctly as the natives.

The vocal sounds and articulations which form the essential elements of pronunciation, and the greater number of which are common to most languages, are easily distinguished and produced by a person whose ear has been impressed with them; but the various intonations of voice which, under the name of accent, constitute its other elements, present some difficulty in a foreign language, because, in their infinite variety, the peculiar and delicate shades of modulation which characterise them in each nation, easily escape the discriminative powers of the auditory organs.

Accents are of three kinds, *syllabic* or *prosodiac*, *national* or *provincial*, *oratorical* or *emphatical:* the first characterises the language, the second the nation or province, and the third the individual.

The syllabic accent is a vocal, or rather tonic inflection given to particular syllables, independently of quantity, and variously modulated in different languages. This inflection or modulation, generally a high or acute note, is altogether distinct from loudness of sound: the report of cannon, for example, is very loud, but very low or grave in intonation. Such is the diversity of which the syllabic accent is susceptible, that many Chinese words, all of which are monosyllabic, assume ten or twelve different significations, by a change in accentuation. The Chinese language is so musically accented as to form a kind of recitative.

The Greek prosody, reduced to fixed rules in both accent and quantity, presents the most complete system of melody which, to our knowledge, has ever been applied to the oral expression of man. Besides the musical rise of the vocal tone, which was marked by the ancient Greeks with the written acute accent on

the vowels, a lowering of the tone or falling cadence, expressed by the grave accent, modified certain syllables; whilst others, admitting of these two inflections in succession, were distinguished by the accent, called circumflex. This accent, formed of the acute and grave, necessarily indicated a syllable double the length of the others. There is every reason to suppose, that the Greek language has lost none of those vocal inflections and musical modulations of tone which render it a perpetual melody. The modern Greeks place the syllabic accent where we are taught to place it by the ancient Greek manuscripts and Greek grammars.

The Latin tongue had also vocal inflections corresponding to those which are marked by the written acute, grave, and circumflex accents in Greek. Cicero compares their effect in ordinary discourse to a species of singing.* Quintilian explains the law which regulated the respective places of these three syllabic accents in the Latin pronunciation.† However, the written accents which are now used in that language have no reference to these tonic inflections; and its modern prosody treats only of quantity. The syllabic accent of the Latin is entirely lost to us; it is so much difficulty removed from the classical learner.

In modern languages, this accent demands serious attention, and nothing but long habit in hearing the foreigners can familiarise learners with it. In Italian, the syllabic accent consists invariably in the tonic elevation of the vocal note on certain syllables, most generally the penultimate, without prejudice to the fulness or length of the other syllables of the word, both the accented and the unaccented vowels being equally full and distinct: the difference between them is merely in the tone;—the former is a high and the latter a low note, hence a pleasing variation of musical intonations.

In English, this accent, as every other department of the English pronunciation, is subject to great irregularity; it has no fixed place or character: it consists, in general, in a peculiar stress, which is rendered the more sensible as the unaccented syllables are, for the greater part, short and indistinct. The accented syllables differ from the unaccented by loudness of voice rather than by acuteness of sound or elevation of intonation. Its other characteristics are extremely variable; sometimes it combines quantity with the rising inflection of the note, and sometimes it consists in either of these separately; it renders some

* *De Orat.*, N. xvii., xviii. † *Inst. Orat.*, Lib. 1, cap. vi.

vowels acute and others grave ; in some syllables, it includes the consonant annexed to the vowel, and in others it rests exclusively on the vowel. The confusion is not a little increased by the practice of retaining, in contempt of the analogies of the language, the original accent of words derived from different languages. The English syllabic accent is not, in general, agreeable to the ear of a person unused to it. "The music of our language," says Lord Monboddo, "is nothing better than the music of a drum, in which we perceive no difference except that of louder or softer, according as the instrument is more or less forcibly struck."*

The French language, although possessing in its written form the three Greek accents, does not assign to them the same office which they performed in the latter language ; they generally supply a deficiency in the alphabet, and indicate differences of sound and meaning ; they are, in fact, signs of orthography as well as of prosody.† This language has no syllabic accent, and every vowel, with the exception of unaccented *e*, is equally full and emphatic. Yet the musical modulation of its pronunciation loses nothing by the absence of this accent; for its fifteen elementary sounds are uttered in different intonations : *a*, for example, is mostly a treble note, *â* always a tenor, and *au* a bass note (23). In English, the tonic inflection of the vowels depends on their relative position in the words ; thus the same vowel may express, sometimes, a high, and sometimes, a low sound, according to its place ; whereas, in French, the same vowel, or combination of vowels, is always high or low, whatever be its place in words. The fixity of inflections considerably facilitates the French pronunciation to foreigners ; whilst the French find it, in general, difficult to catch that accent in other languages.

The *national accent* does not affect particular elements of pronunciation, but the whole tenor of discourse; it consists in a vocal modulation peculiar to a nation, and arising from certain influences of climate and national origin. This modulation is not, however, common to all the natives of an extensive country,

* *Origin and Progress of Language.*

† The acute (´) and grave (`) accents are placed only on the vowel *e*, with the exception of the grave in *à* (to), *là* (there), and *déjà* (already). These two accents, by a singular anomaly, affect the vowel in direct opposition to their names: *é* has a grave sound, *è* an acute. The circumflex (^) may be placed on the five vowels; it indicates a long sound, makes *e* acute, *a* and *o* grave, but does not change the sound of *u*.

especially when the nation is composed of races originally distinct. Hence, in every province of almost any country, it is modified into a provincial accent, which results from raising or lowering the tones, lengthening or shortening the sounds, harshness or softness of articulations, and innumerable other modifications of speech which alter the national accent, and ought consequently to be avoided, when circumstances permit. The accent of the capital is, in general, that to be preferred, although not always the most pleasing. The common saying in France, that, "to speak French well, one ought not to have any accent," does not imply a recommendation of monotony, but a condemnation of provincial accents. The Italian proverbial expression, "Lingua toscana in bocca romana" (Tuscan tongue in Roman mouth), assigns likewise to Rome the privilege of the standard Italian pronunciation and accent.

The peculiar modulation and inflection of the voice, which constitute the national accent of a people, cannot easily be caught after the period of childhood—counteracted as they are by long habit in a different mode of accentuation. Besides, this accent has no elements on which the attention may rest, no rule by which it may be learned. Many persons, from long and diligent study of foreign standard works, and from mixing in good society abroad, have vied with the natives in style and pronunciation, without ever being able to acquire their identical national accent. Of all the parts of a foreign language, this is certainly the most difficult. This should not, however, discourage those who may be ambitious of arriving at perfection; for this accent is only a secondary accomplishment, the non-possession of which does not affect the knowledge of a language. It would be erroneous to infer from the peculiar accent of a foreigner, that he does not know the language, or that he pronounces it incorrectly: one may have a good pronunciation and a bad accent, as also a good accent and a bad pronunciation.

It is besides, difficult to decide which is the national accent; for it varies with every province,—nay, with every town. It is not, in general, of great importance to which of these the preference should be given; and, although in France, for example, the Parisian accent is considered the standard, a deviation from it cannot be said to constitute bad speaking. He who pronounces French words correctly, who has a large supply of them, and can command their grammatical and idiomatical arrangement so as to express all his ideas with ease, truly

knows the language, although he should speak with a Gascon, an English, or any other accent. Could Walter Scott and O'Connell be taxed with ignorance of the English language, because the one spoke with the Scotch and the other with the Irish "brogue"? Could Theophrastus be said not to have known Greek, or Livy, Latin, because a woman in Athens discovered, by the accent of the former, that he was not an Athenian, and another in Rome, that the latter was not a native of that city?

The *oratorical accent* is the peculiar emphasis or intonation with which words and phrases are pronounced, to attract the attention of the hearers, and to convey to their minds the impression under which they are uttered. This accent, being the natural expression of feelings common to humanity, is the birthright of all men. Unlike the syllabic accent, which, being an element of pronunciation, varies with the genius of every language, or the national accent, which characterises a people, it is universally the same in all languages and with all nations; it belongs, in fact, to the language of action, depends on the manner in which the speaker's mind is affected, and falls on the corresponding words in every language. It conveys most accurately innumerable shades of ideas and feelings not easily expressed in words; while its absence would not only render oral communication insufferably monotonous, but would make it extremely vague, obscure, and incomplete. This verbal intonation may truly be called the soul of discourse: it gives to all passions and sentiments their just expression. The exclamative particle *ah*, for example, may, according to the peculiar vocal inflection with which it is uttered, express admiration, pain, joy, contempt, anger, fear, and almost all the emotions of the heart. In fact, the oratorical accent assumes an endless variety of modulations which the ear readily distinguishes, but which art cannot analyse. This accent, the natural expression of human feelings, is available only when a language is used as a spontaneous manifestation of thought, and its discriminate application is fostered by the example of good speakers.

Important as pronunciation is, its value should not, however, be estimated above its desert. For its sake, higher departments of language are often most injudiciously overlooked. When parents select a French teacher for their children, before they inquire if he is a Parisian, they should ascertain that he is a man of sound judgment and of education; for it is far more

desirable that he should cultivate the understanding of his pupils than their ears ; that he should assist them in acquiring sensible and useful ideas, a clear and correct style, precise and select terms, rather than a *genteel* accent.

SECT. II.—MODE OF ACQUIRING THE PRONUNCIATION, ACCENT AND PROSODY.

We must now retrace our steps, to consider the second object, —the acquisition of the pronunciation,—to be accomplished through the exercises in hearing.

One part of the process consists in the teacher's reading for the third time the same passage, in short phrases, which his pupils repeat after him. On this third reading, he must pronounce every syllable very fully and slowly—marking distinctly its accent and relative quantity—to give the hearers clear perceptions of the vocal and prosodiac elements of every word. This fulness and slowness of utterance are indispensable in the beginning ; because a new impression, to be duly appreciated and remembered, requires the object which causes it to remain, for some time, under the action of the organ.

In large schools, separate apartments should be appropriated to the classes of foreign living languages ; for, in the midst of the buzz heard in a crowded schoolroom, it would be impossible for learners, with even the most intense attention, to distinguish the various shades of sounds and their diversified intonations, as uttered by the professor.

The practice of pronouncing phrases just heard directs the attention of learners to the elements of pronunciation, as also to the blending of words, and trains their organs of speech to the new sounds and articulations ; yet it would not be advisable to introduce it at their entrance upon the study. They should hear the vocal elements for a long time before they attempt to reproduce them. Our conviction of the right pronunciation of native words does not arise so much from our recollection of having often uttered them in any particular way, as from our consciousness of having heard them pronounced by persons reputed good speakers. It must be the same with the foreign pronunciation : let the pupils hear the language often enough to have it in their power to recollect the manner in which it is pronounced by their instructor ; their subsequent imitation of

it will present no difficulty. It is by frequently hearing the teacher that learners acquire habits which will enable them afterwards, instinctively to pronounce correctly in his absence.

When learners repeat after the professor, they should attend to the foreign pronunciation, as a young child does to the native, without regard to the alphabetical characters. The written word is the sign of the spoken word; but, as it is consistent with reason that the thing signified should precede the sign in the mind, it is obvious that we should endeavour to make ourselves acquainted with the spoken word, before inquiring after the manner in which it is represented to the eye. It is particularly with regard to the pronunciation that *impression* must precede *expression*.

At a more advanced period, attention to the orthography will be useful in assisting learners to retain the articulate words, as it will associate them in the mind with their written form. At the same time, it must be admitted that this association is not indispensable for retaining either the pronunciation or the orthography, as proved in the case of persons who do not know how to read, and of the deaf and dumb who read and write; they possess one of these departments of a language without the other.

In the first stage of this practice, the object proposed is only to train the organs to the new sounds and articulations. Attending thus early to the spelling, when in the act of pronouncing, would, in many instances, mislead learners,—so inefficient is orthography as a guide to pronunciation. Identity of character in the two languages is a snare to a beginner, who is apt to attach to letters the pronunciation to which he is accustomed. Young children, repeating the words they hear, never trouble themselves about the letters which enter into the composition of them; and are nevertheless very expert in acquiring the pronunciation of their own, or of any other language.

Let the pupils always pronounce fearlessly and fully, to afford the instructor the opportunity of correcting the slightest error, and thus early guarding them against habits of carelessness. Fulness of utterance would give them greater compass of voice, variety of tone, clearness of sound, and distinctness of articulation: all which qualities contribute much more than loudness to a speaker's being well heard. Each time the pupils fail in uttering the correct sound, in marking the true intonation, or

blending the words properly, the professor should repeat the words full and long. But let them not be discouraged if they do not at once succeed in imitating the identical pronunciation which they have just heard: failure only proves that they need to listen again to their model. The voice, that docile slave of the ear, cannot fail to produce such sounds and prosodiac elements as are clearly impressed on this organ. The novelty of the foreign pronunciation hinders a beginner from noticing, at once, all the shades of difference which distinguish its elements, especially the accent and quantity: these are so delicate that, to be perceived, they demand extreme sensibility of the organ, cultivated by long and patient practice in hearing. If he attempt to utter the foreign words before his ear has been sufficiently attuned to the voice of his instructor, he will infallibly commit errors, of which he can hardly be made conscious.

When a learner fails to produce the right sound or articulation, an inexperienced teacher is apt to require him to repeat the attempt again and again; he endeavours, but in vain, to explain its nature; the disheartened pupil loses all hope of ever being able to acquire that pronunciation:—in instruction, as in all the affairs of life, success is defeated by a distrust of our capability to accomplish the desired end. Instead of teasing his pupils by untimely and repeated attempts, which must be both irksome and unsuccessful,—instead of explaining a mechanism of articulation which he probably does not himself well understand, the teacher has only to read to them slowly and distinctly until their ears are completely tuned to the sounds. However, the better to direct their attention to the peculiarities of pronunciation and prosody of the foreign language, he may occasionally point out the resemblances and differences which its vocal elements bear with those of their own language; he may also adduce rules of orthoëpy which will assist their memory by generalising the relations existing between its vocal and alphabetical elements. But such is the influence of reiterated impression on the imitative faculty, that the apprenticeship of the vocal organ is carried on independently of rules, of reflection, and even of the will. By this natural process, the learner acquires well and with perfect ease, what most instructors take much pains to teach badly. The more frequently the same sounds and accents strike the ear, the more its fibres vibrate in unison with them and the more permanent is their association in the mind with the ideas which they signify. Hence, the

repetition of the same melody, developing both the faculty of hearing and the power of association, increases the capability of appreciating, enjoying, and reproducing it.

If the learner has previously studied the passage selected by the professor for exercise in pronunciation, or if he is a proficient in understanding the written language, the articulate words which he hears will easily recall their written form; and, by the law of association, he will be afforded an additional means of retaining their pronunciation. The triple association of the *sense, sound,* and *spelling* of the words must impress them on the mind in the most indelible manner. Under any circumstance, reading to the pupil should be continued until the foreign words have been so frequently repeated, that their pronunciation, associated with their import, has become habitual to his ear and to his mind.

When learners are practically acquainted with the pronunciation of a foreign language, their attention may be more particularly directed to its prosody, by their instructor reading to them poetical compositions in different metres. In this, as in every other department of the study of a language, practice should precede theory. It is only when the ear has been, by long experience, made conscious of the existence and nature of tones and time in syllables, that the mind can investigate melody and rhythm. In reading the Greek or Latin poets to his advanced pupils, the professor should avail himself of the superiority of ancient prosody, to point out the effects of contrasted sounds, of long and short, high and low notes: he should explain to them quantity, accents, cadences, cæsuras, rhythms, metres, pauses, all that constitutes the mechanism of verse and the melody of language.

The exercises in hearing would also offer the most effectual means of reforming the Erasmian pronunciation of the Greek, which now prevails in Europe, to the great prejudice of that language. By the universal adoption of the pronunciation now current in modern Greece, the learned, who, in different countries, cultivate Greek literature, would not only understand each other, but would be put in direct communication with a people to whom we are attached by so many ties. If natives of Greece were encouraged to fill chairs in our European universities and colleges, they would, in a few years, by the irresistible influence of their oral reading, secure to our rising generation a pure and melodious Greek accent, and diffuse

through the western world a uniformity of pronunciation, which would greatly increase the usefulness of that study.*

From all that has now been said on the mode of acquiring the pronunciation and accent of a foreign language, it is evident that many unsuccessful attempts at pronouncing will be spared the learner, if he patiently listen until familiarised with the sounds, before he venture to read aloud. As to this exercise, which requires further development, we make it the subject of the following chapter, and, for the present, will only observe that, for the first six months at least, the learner, anxious to acquire the pronunciation of a living language, should abstain from oral reading, and should, when in the presence of his teacher, exercise his ear rather than his tongue. If this advice be followed, the learner, giving himself no more trouble in the foreign pronunciation than he did in his own, will, in opposition to the general opinion, find it the easiest part of the language; and it should be so; for if, in both cases, the means of acquisition are the same, there is no reason why the results should not also be the same.

SECT. III.—CAUSES OF A DEFECTIVE PRONUNCIATION, AND THE REMEDY.

That a defective pronunciation is often contracted, is an evil seldom attributable to the learner: it may, indeed, when he is very young, or careless of improvement, arise from inattention; but, in general, his errors result either from the bad pronunciation of the teacher or from the injudicious method pursued. It does not necessarily follow, as some people imagine, that, because the teacher pronounces the foreign language correctly, his pupils must do so likewise: to know *what* to teach is one thing, to know *how* to teach is another. In languages, more than in any other department of instruction, experience and skill in the art of teaching will do more for the advancement of the pupil, than profound knowledge on the part of the master. It often happens that the best informed know not how to communicate to others the knowledge which they possess. This must be particularly the case with one who teaches his own language in circumstances totally different from those in which he was placed when

* For an able advocacy of this reform, see Mr. C. Alexandre's *Report to the Minister of Public Instruction in France*, dated Smyrna, 23 May, 1846.

learning it: he is not even aware that he can look to his own experience for the course he should pursue.

But frequently also parents are to blame when, for a mere pecuniary consideration, they forfeit every prospect of their children acquiring a good pronunciation, by confiding them to persons who, owing to the erroneous course which they pursued in learning the language, can know but very little of it. Do they imagine that a Frenchman or any other foreigner, who has resided two or three years in this country, could impart to their children a pure English pronunciation and a genuine English style? Surely not. And if so few foreigners can speak English correctly even after a long residence in England, is it not preposterous to suppose, for example, that Germans, Italians, Poles, or English persons who probably never heard French spoken, either here or in France, or who may have only spent six months in Paris, could make their pupils speak with a Parisian accent and in the idiomatic style of the natives.

If persons who teach languages not their own contribute to their being so imperfectly spoken, those foreign teachers who pronounce their own idioms with purity are generally not much more successful in imparting a correct pronunciation; because, as before noticed, they often neglect the principle of imitation on which alone its acquisition depends. We have already objected to learning words by rote, and alternately pronouncing and translating in the first stages of the study, as calculated to create bad habits; the same objection applies to the practice of untimely reading to the teacher and learning dialogues, which are almost universally adopted in this country, and which force a defective pronunciation on learners, by making them pronounce words before they have heard them sufficiently to be able to discriminate between the various shades of sounds and intonations. We will more fully advert to these two practices when treating of oral reading and mnemonic exercises.

To those who may have been the victims of their instructor's ignorance or inexperience, the plan recommended in this and the preceding chapter would prove useful in correcting their defective pronunciation: by long silence and much practice in hearing, the tongue and the ear will effectually exchange bad habits for good. But it will take much more time merely to eradicate these bad habits than it would have taken to acquire good ones, if the learners had at once begun in the right way, and with a competent teacher. Yet it is not unusual for parents to imagine,

after having had their children ill taught for years, that they have nearly reached perfection, and to place them under an eminent professor for three or four months, that he may give them the last polish; whereas, to continue the metaphor, a scrubbing-brush would rather be wanted for as many years to rub away errors that have become second nature to them. Probably such parents would have the simplicity to believe that a residence of a few months in the vicinity of St. James's would suffice to rid an Irishman or a Scotchman of his brogue. People should have some consideration for the teacher: it is troublesome enough for him to impress on his pupils' ear a correct pronunciation, without having also the annoyance of contending with an incorrect one.

The process which we recommend is, we admit, more troublesome to the instructor than simply hearing his pupils read; but it cannot fail to impart a correct pronunciation to them if he himself pronounces well, or to cure them of a defective one if they have previously been badly taught. It has also the peculiar advantage that it presents little difficulty even to the most inexperienced teacher. One may easily be found who pronounces well and reads fluently. There are few foreign instructors who are not, at least, in possession of these two requisites in their native tongue. Persons teaching a language not their own, and diffident in speaking it, may yet follow this course, provided their pronunciation be correct.

As, by the natural method above detailed, the pronunciation of the teacher becomes necessarily that of the pupils, if the former should not be a native of the country whose language he teaches, and if there should be reason to suspect his pronunciation, he had better not pursue it; for, by it, all his defects would certainly be communicated to his pupils. Let him confine himself to the teaching of the written language. The notion of acquiring the spoken language must be altogether abandoned, if the learner has no instructor, or has one on whose pronunciation he cannot depend.

SECT. IV.—OF TREATISES AND DICTIONARIES OF PRONUNCIATION.

Treatises or dictionaries of pronunciation cannot supply the absence of a living model. They may be useful to those who are already acquainted with the language; but they cannot be of any service to a foreigner ignorant of it.

Every language has vowel sounds, articulations, and an accentuation peculiar to it. Of the French vocal elements, for example, eight sounds and one articulation are not in the English pronunciation, and cannot, therefore, be represented by English letters.* The letters are to an English person signs of English sounds and articulations, and whatever their combinations may be, they will never present to him the idea of any sounds or articulations but those with which he is already acquainted, for habit has impressed on his mind an immediate association of these vocal elements with their alphabetical characters.

As the alphabetical characters of the French language have a power corresponding to the extensive scale of its elementary sounds, the English pronunciation may be less imperfectly conveyed to a French person in writing than the French pronunciation to an English person; but no idea can, by this means, be communicated to him of either the accented or the unaccented syllables in English: he must hear the words of that language over and over, to form a just conception of the peculiar energy of its accented, and of the brevity and indistinctness of its unaccented syllables.

Notwithstanding these facts, many persons, who probably were ignorant of the pronunciation of either language, have attempted to assimilate the French sounds to the English, and have thereby misled learners. Walker, in his Dictionary, fell into this error in his comparison of the English and the French sounds. Others have compiled dictionaries, phrase-books, and similar works, in which they pretend to represent the French pronunciation by alphabetical combinations. The attempt to spell words in one language as they are pronounced in another, must, in most cases, prove unsuccessful: for the pen can neither represent new sounds to the eye, nor mark the imperceptible shades of colloquial intonation. Such contrivances only familiarise the eye with a

* The French sounds represented by *á, é, u, eû, an, in, on, un,* and the articulation of which *ll* is the sign, do not exist in the English pronunciation.

defective spelling of the foreign words. Let any one well acquainted with the pronunciation of both languages open at random one of these works, and he will at once be struck with the absurdity of such representations. These compositions, complete failures throughout, must lead to a pronunciation which would excite the laughter of the French people, were it not for their well known courtesy to foreigners in this respect.

The great diversity of import attached to the same letters and combinations of letters in English, makes this language particularly unfit for reducing in writing the articulate words of other languages. English navigators and travellers must labour under great disadvantages in their attempt to convey the names of foreign places, or to enrich ethnography with information concerning the dialects of the barbarous tribes whom they visit.

Some persons, aware of the inefficiency of visible representations of sounds, have adopted another practice, which, however, is equally defective: they have endeavoured to describe their mode of production. For a specimen of one of these attempts we would refer the reader to Mr. De Porquet, who explains the French sound of *u* (which, by the by, he calls an articulation), in these terms: "By pronouncing the following *words* in English *se, pe, me,* or *si, pi, ni, mi,* in French, and, then without altering the position of the tongue, but merely closing the lips *upwards*, the *u* will be as distinctly uttered as from a Parisian." *

If any one can understand this nonsense we will send him to Mr. Merlet to try another experiment on the pronunciation of the French syllable *un*, described, in his *Traducteur Français*, as follows: "Utter with a greater effort the sound *u* from the pit of the stomach, and convey it through the nose, taking care to keep the tongue down, in order to avoid the sound of *n*." Let the most ingenious person draw from his *stomach* all the sounds within the power of ventriloquism, and exercise complete control over his nose and tongue, he will never produce that sound, if he has not previously heard it; and, if he has, all the above description goes for nothing.

Written descriptions, or representations of new sounds, can but lead astray those who have not heard them. The ear alone can judge of sounds, as the eye alone judges of colours. Each organ has its peculiar sensations, inappreciable by the other

* *Syllabaire Parisien.*

organs. Language cannot perform the office of our senses, and it is inadequate to effect more than a mere reference to our experience. He who never saw snow, tasted truffles, smelt a rose, or suffered from the gout, cannot be made to conceive exactly the sensations they produce, either by the most descriptive language, or the most minute combinations of other sensations. In order to have a correct idea of the French *u* or *un*, the English *th*, the German *ch*, the Italian *gli*, and the Spanish *x*, foreigners must hear them from the mouth of a native. It would be just as impossible to represent by description, or otherwise, these vocal elements, simple as they are, as to convey a notion of the roar of Niagara's fall to a person who never heard it.

SECT. V.—OF THE FOREIGN ALPHABET AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRONUNCIATION.

We must here mention two other practices which, although not very prejudicial to the attainment of a correct pronunciation, ought, nevertheless, to be avoided, because they are unnecessary: we mean, learning the foreign alphabet and spelling foreign words, as a preparation for pronouncing them.

The foreign names of the letters are not only useless, they are perplexing to the learners, since their sounds, as we have remarked, are frequently different from their names. Of what utility is it, for instance, to a French person learning English, to know the name of the English letter *a*, to arrive at its proper sound in various words, as *fat, fatal, far, fall, any, image, quality, carriage*, in which it is pronounced eight different ways, and is silent in the last word? Do the English, who justly pique themselves on calling that letter by its right English name, find it easier to pronounce these words, than the Irish, who call it differently. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

We do not pretend to say, that it is indifferent what names are given to the letters, but simply that their names, whatever they may be, are essentially a distinct thing from their power, that is, from the vocal sounds and articulations they represent in practice. The uses of things, rather than their names, should, for every practical purpose, be the object of consideration. We have already observed that the thing represented should be known before the sign. The pronunciation which the alpha-

betical character assumes, when embodied in words, is the thing signified; its name is the sign. It is the former sort of information which is more immediately required by a person who wishes to pronounce the written words.

A foreign alphabet, however, may be useful to a person who knows the language to which it belongs sufficiently well to converse in it, as its words and their orthography may become a subject of conversation, and the letters may then require to be named in that language. In addressing foreigners on matters relative to orthography, one should be able to designate the alphabetical characters by their right names to be understood. A few minutes would suffice to render them familiar to a person who has already some knowledge of the language.

But it is contrary to reason to call, as some do, the letters of a foreign language by their foreign names, when speaking the native tongue,—a practice which becomes downright absurdity, when the person spoken to is unacquainted with that foreign language. If, in the general intercourse of society, conversation should fall on etymology, or any other subject requiring the mention of the alphabetical elements of different languages, not only would the introduction of their foreign names savour of pedantry on the part of the speaker, but it would ungraciouly compel the uninitiated to a painful acknowledgment of ignorance: and, among persons acquainted with the languages referred to, it would produce confusion, in consequence of the diversity of names given to the same letters in different languages. The English, for example, give to *a* and *e* the names which the French give respectively to *e* and *i*. It is obvious that an object, whether an alphabetic character or any other, for which there is a name, must be called by that name in the language which is, at the time, the medium of communication. If the alphabetical character alluded to does not exist in the language of the speaker, its foreign name must then be used, as would any foreign term for which there is no equivalent.

Oral spelling, considered as a preparatory step to reading the native tongue, is disapproved of by all persons who have reflected on this subject; it is still more objectionable in the study of a foreign language. In the vernacular, children are assisted in combining letters into words by previous acquaintance with these words in another form. In a language not their own, beginners are deprived of this assistance. If an English child be given the word *cow* to spell, he will certainly

be embarrassed, because the names of the letters *ce, o, double u* uttered separately, are quite different from their collective power. If, after being told the right pronunciation, he retains it, it is not because the letters which compose the word *cow* indicate its sound; but because, having heard and pronounced that word before, he easily and at once associates with it the idea of the animal; and the written word *cow* becomes a visible sign corresponding to the articulate one which is familiar to him. It is very different in a foreign language: an English child, who learns French and is told the pronunciation of a French word, has no clue by which to arrive at, or remember it, since he has never heard nor used the word before. Hence it is, that the names of the letters and the practice of spelling words are not conducive to the acquiring of the foreign pronunciation.

CHAPTER III.

ORAL READING.

SECT. I.—ORAL READING—AS A MEANS OF ACQUIRING THE PRONUNCIATION OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

ORAL reading—the art of delivering written language—properly claims attention in this Book; for it is based on the practice of hearing. He who has not heard a language cannot pronounce its written words correctly. That learners should, as is usually done, be made to read aloud, instead of listening to their teachers, is a most unaccountable perversion of principles. But, whether this art be looked upon as a means of acquiring the foreign pronunciation, or as a valuable acquisition, it is, in our opinion, equally liable to objection.

Considered in the first light, oral reading, at the outset, is in direct opposition to nature and reason. Attempting to read foreign words which have not been heard, is as absurd as would be an attempt to sketch objects which have not been seen. In pronunciation, as in drawing, penmanship, and all arts of imitation, the correctness of the execution is based on patient study of the model. In every thing which regards the foreign pronunciation the teacher's voice is the model. The process by which this model may be rendered familiar to the learners has been explained at length in the two preceding chapters.

The practice of reading aloud a foreign language begets an incorrect pronunciation, if prematurely attempted. The written words, as was observed in the foregoing Chapter, necessarily lead to a false pronunciation, by recalling to the mind of a beginner the deeply-rooted native sounds and intonations. On seeing the same letters combined in the same way as in his own language, he naturally attaches to them the sounds to which he is accustomed, although perfect resemblance very seldom occurs. The proportion, for example, of syllables similarly pronounced in French and in English, being about one in fifty, he cannot help

committing forty-nine mistakes in fifty French syllables which he utters. Were he corrected at every error, he could not proceed. The teacher, partly from inattention, or to save himself trouble, and partly not to discourage the beginner, notices only the most glaring errors, and reserves the correction of those which he considers as secondary for a later period, when, in fact, they will have become almost incurable from habit.

Another great difficulty which a person encounters in reading foreign languages orally, arises from the want of affinity between their orthography and their pronunciation. In our derived idioms, the phonographic principle has been so much departed from in the passage of words through different languages, that, in many instances, their orthography rather indicates etymology than represents pronunciation. This discordance between the spoken and the written signs is in none, perhaps, more striking than in the French and the English. In the former it consists in the consonants being frequently silent, and in the latter in the vowels being indistinctly and variously pronounced. These facts sufficiently establish the singular anomaly, that neither language is pronounced as it is spelled, and that, consequently, their written form is an unfit medium for arriving at their pronunciation.

Those who practise oral reading as a means of acquiring the pronunciation of a foreign language, are prone to imagine that the difficulty will be overcome by perseverance; but the unavoidable repetition of the errors only strengthens them, and renders them so familiar to the ear of the deluded reader, that he often mistakes the facility which he acquires in uttering them for correctness of enunciation. Bad habits thus fortified by self-complacency, are almost unconquerable. To acknowledge that to be wrong, which, from long practice, is done with ease and pleasure, is an effort of reason and self-denial above the power of the great majority of persons.

People are, in general, too anxious to read aloud in a foreign language; they delight in hearing their own voice give utterance to strange words; and, although in doing so they often introduce none but the sounds of their own language, these are applied and combined in so novel a manner, that the readers are apt to fancy they actually pronounce the foreign language. Fraught with evil consequences as is this childish and irrational practice, it is but too frequently encouraged by teachers who pronounce well themselves, but think it less troublesome to listen to their

pupils than to read to them. There cannot be too much blame laid on those who thus sacrifice to their convenience the improvement of the learners committed to their care. Some excuse, however, may be given for those who do not offer themselves as models in pronunciation, either from distrust in their own powers of elocution, or a consciousness of imperfect knowledge of the foreign language. But, while we give them due credit for candour, we cannot but pity the learners who have the double misfortune of pursuing a bad course under incompetent instructors.

It is particularly at the outset of the study, and when the written language is as yet imperfectly understood, that oral reading must be avoided. It is contrary to reason to attend to the pronunciation and orthography of words, before knowing their signification; for, should the learner even succeed in pronouncing or writing them correctly, it would be of little benefit to him. Spoken and written words, divested of their meaning, are deprived of the great link by which memory can lay hold on them; and, if they are not fixed on the mind, how can their pronunciation or spelling be retained? Oral reading should not be attempted, until some progress has been made in mental reading.

The only natural and rational way of proceeding is, as we have shown, to acquire the foreign pronunciation, as the vernacular, by constantly associating ideas with the words spoken by a native, not by the learner's reading them himself: it must be learned through the ear, not through the eye. We doubt not that this will be the more readily assented to, when it is considered that the processes by which the pronunciation is arrived at in speaking and in oral reading, are the reverse of each other. In the act of speaking, the words follow spontaneously and by an immediate connection, their correlative ideas, as these rapidly pass through the mind; the speaker becomes conscious of having employed them, only from the impressions which they make on his own ear; and the notice he may afterwards take of their orthography is deduced from the pronunciation. In reading aloud, on the contrary, the pronunciation is deduced from the orthography; it is associated with alphabetical combinations, not with ideas. From this difference in the processes by which oral reading and speaking are performed, it often happens that a disciple of the ordinary routine reads a foreign word correctly and speaks it badly.

In public instruction, reading aloud by the learners is still

more objectionable; for, were the class even composed of only ten or twelve persons, while each in succession stumbles over a dozen lines, a considerable portion of time is lost to the rest, or rather is employed in habituating their ears to a barbarous pronunciation, which, by its baneful influence, counteracts the effects of the right pronunciation, seldom heard from the professor. Whereas, by reading to them in the manner explained in the foregoing chapter, he can, in considerably less time, impress a correct pronunciation and accent on a large number as effectively as on one pupil.

SECT. II.—ORAL READING CONSIDERED AS AN ACCOMPLISHMENT.

Now, viewing oral reading in a foreign language as an accomplishment, we do not see how it is likely to be made available when once acquired. Very seldom, indeed, has any one occasion to read aloud in a foreign language. A person acquainted with it will seldom find among his fellow-citizens, or in his own family, persons willing or able to form an auditory, when he is inclined to display his abilities in foreign elocution. If he goes abroad, he will have still less chance of turning this art to use; for, should those among whom he happens to sojourn require a reader, they would surely not select him.

It is, besides, an art so difficult, so rare, even in one's own language, that not one in a hundred educated persons is found to possess it to the satisfaction of others, although ninety-nine in a hundred would be offended, were they told that they knew not how to read. It is perhaps more difficult to read well than to write well. Good authors frequently read their own compositions improperly. Thomson, author of "The Seasons," read his own verses so badly, that a friend of his once snatched from his hands one of his poems as he was in the act of reading it, reproaching him with destroying his own composition. "That a general inability," says Sheridan, "to read or speak with propriety and grace in public runs through the natives of the British dominions, is acknowledged; it shows itself in our senate and churches, on the bench and at the bar." *

The scarcity of good readers cannot be wondered at, when we reflect on all that is requisite to reach any degree of perfection in that accomplishment. It would prove far more useful to

* *Lectures on Elocution.*

young people to have their best efforts directed to its acquisition in the native tongue, than to waste them in a vain pursuit in another language: particularly, if it be considered that a person who excels in reading the vernacular tongue will read equally well any other, as soon as he has mastered its pronunciation, and can catch the sense at sight.

Nature and art must combine to form a reader. The acquirement of this agreeable accomplishment depends, first, on a perfect understanding of the written language, that the inflections and intonations of the voice may be made instantaneously to suit the style and subject, the characters introduced in a narrative, and the sentiments they express; secondly, on a complete mastery of the pronunciation, that attention be not diverted from the sense. If these two points have not been previously achieved, the reader adopts a disagreeable monotony or sing-song, which, when confirmed into habit, cannot easily be eradicated. This faulty intonation, however, will be avoided by not allowing the learner to read aloud, until his ear has been properly trained to the sounds, and his taste formed by examples worthy of imitation. The art of reading, like its sister arts,—theatrical recitation and oratorical delivery,—is best cultivated under the influence of good models.

Among the requisites of good reading which, beside the above, are indispensable for attaining the highest possible perfection in this delightful art, we will mention the following qualities, which may be the gift of nature or the fruit of education:—rapidity of sight, by which the eye outstrips the voice and embraces more words than the tongue utters; a voice pure, sonorous, and capable of varied modulation, clear utterance, great command over the respiratory function, and a flexible countenance; acute sensibility, lively sympathy, and great powers of imitation, quick conception, vivid imagination, correct judgment, and refined taste. In addition to these physical, moral, and intellectual qualifications, the rare assemblage of which sufficiently shows the difficulty of the art, a reader should possess a thorough knowledge of grammar, prosody, and rhetoric; should have a mind enriched with information, to seize every allusion; should know the human heart, to enter into every sentiment, and give expression to it; should, finally, be able to vary his manner of delivery with every style and every subject.

But, we repeat it, the essential requisites, those without which all the others must prove unavailing, are perfect mastery of the

pronunciation and the power of seizing instantaneously the sense and spirit of an author. It is neither from reflection nor from rule, that he who makes a request, adopts a supplicating tone, that his desires, emotions, and passions are manifested by a particular inflection of the voice, or expression of the countenance; but it is the intimate union which exists between the internal sensations and the external signs, that makes the one the necessary consequence of the other. Let the reader but feel, and the proper tone will naturally follow. Like the actor, he must identify himself with his subject; must speak as his own the thoughts and sentiments which his eye conveys from the book to his mind. The nearer the genius of the reader approaches to that of the author, the more complete is the identification, and consequently the more correct will be the reading.

Such is the effect of this enchanting art on the hearers, that Lafontaine, who, at the age of twenty-two, had not yet composed a line of poetry, was, for the first time, made conscious of his own poetical powers, by hearing an ode of Malherbe read with proper emphasis and cadence. Demosthenes may be cited as another remarkable instance of the influence of just delivery on the hearer. Plutarch relates that, in the beginning of his forensic career, this orator retiring, one day, from the assembly of the people, depressed and afflicted at his ill-success, his friend, the actor Satyrus, followed him to his house, and, after having listened to his lamentations, promised Demosthenes to remove the cause of his failure. He then desired him to recite some verses of Euripides or Sophocles, which the orator did. Satyrus recited the same after him, but with tones and inflections of voice so appropriate, that Demosthenes, for the first time, became fully aware of the importance and power of just delivery; and, from that moment, he rose rapidly above all his competitors.

SECT III.—WHEN AND HOW ORAL READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE OUGHT TO BE PRACTISED.

Although the art of oral reading in a foreign language be very little needed by the generality of people, and is not, as already shown, the best means of acquiring a pure pronunciation, yet, as it may sometimes be required, it should not be altogether disregarded. But it should be reserved for the last stage in the study of the language; because, in a foreign tongue,

as in the native, the most certain way of reading well is, first, to learn to speak well, and, then, to read as one speaks.

When it is thought that the foreign pronunciation has, by the method above detailed, become familiar to the learner, he may occasionally be requested to read aloud a short passage, as a trial of skill and a test of improvement in that department. He should, at first, practise this exercise in imitation of the instructor. After hearing the same passage read four times in succession, as explained in the beginning of this Book, he will be able to imitate the most minute shades of intonation and accent, as also the particular inflections which the subject demands. In elocution, as in the other fine arts, the first lessons ought to be founded on imitation; imagination, guided by feeling and judgment, will afterwards suggest to each individual the style of delivery which suits his peculiar genius.

In his fourth reading the professor must introduce in his delivery the modulation suitable to the arrangement of the words; he should mark with particular emphasis the accented syllables or the accented words, as he wishes to familiarise his pupil with the syllabic or the oratorical accent. In pronouncing a language, the voice may be diversely modified according to the accent and quantity of syllables, or to the ideas and sentiments expressed: these elements of prosody and elocution should be carefully attended to, as they contribute to render discourse a faithful representation of the thoughts. The professor should read in such a manner as to make the sound an echo to the sense: elevated thoughts and gay images require the voice to be raised above its ordinary pitch, while serious reflections and didactic matter must be expressed in a grave tone; in stern and violent passion the words ought to be pronounced rough and loud; in gentle and kindly emotions the voice assumes a soft and melodious tone; slow delivery suits best a solemn subject, and rapid utterance what is lively and impetuous. It is especially by reading with propriety passages from the great poets and orators that the professor will attune the ear of his pupil, and form his taste to harmony of expression.

When, in his turn, a learner who has had much practice in hearing, reads to his teacher, he should trust to the habits of his ear; and, allowing the pronunciation to take its chance, should direct his attention exclusively to the ideas, with a view to suit his vocal inflections to the subject. To read or speak in a natural and correct tone, he must, when uttering words, have present to

his mind the things meant by these words, and give way to his own feelings. His delivery will thereby be consistent with the subject; and, under the habitual impressions which he has received of a good pronunciation, he can commit but few errors. The instructor, in attending to his pupils' reading expressly to perfect their delivery, is enabled to correct the slightest errors in sound, articulation, accent, quantity, intonation; whereas such errors may escape his notice when he listens to the expression of their ideas in narration or conversation, as his attention is then divided between the details of composition and those of pronunciation.

In a class the more advanced learners,—those who pronounce the foreign language correctly,—may, in turn, and under the superintendence of the teacher, read to their juniors for translation or mental audition;—the former practising elocutional delivery whilst the latter practise hearing: thus will considerable time be saved and a double object attained. This new application of the monitorial system to the teaching of foreign languages, by enabling learners of different degrees of proficiency to join in one class, strikingly illustrates its advantage in public instruction.

After the learner has gained correctness and facility of utterance in the foreign language, he may commit to memory selections of prose or poetry, as an exercise of pronunciation and elocution. These being once properly pronounced and delivered, will afford him the means of practising, at all times, a good pronunciation, and of rendering it habitual by frequent repetition. Such recitations, practised sometimes with the instructor, and sometimes in his absence, will be a standard of correctness by which to regulate his future attempts, and will render every succeeding trial less difficult than the preceding. Recitation affords great facilities for learning inflections, emphases, and pauses; for, when the words are well fixed in the memory, the learner has only to attend to the delivery.

To a person who has once completely mastered the pronunciation of a foreign language, the practice of oral reading and recitation will prove most useful in the absence of foreign society, as a means, always at hand, of keeping up this acquisition. Reading aloud every day a few pages with a natural and correct intonation, by keeping the ear in tune and the tongue in practice, will render the true pronunciation habitual, and thus preserve it to the latest period of life.

If the reader carefully attend to the sense as he utters the words, the frequent association of the ideas with their articulate signs, whether it be aloud or mentally, will supply him with materials of expression and create habits favourable to speaking. Oral reading has afforded to many the means of obtaining success in public speaking. It is especially when practised in the native tongue that exercises in elocution give that command of voice, clear enunciation, and appropriate emphasis, which add so much force and persuasion to just sentiments and harmonious language.

Singing, practised concurrently with reading and recitation, would not only complete the cultivation of the sense of hearing and of the vocal organs, but would materially contribute in forming pleasing readers and speakers. The melody of speech differs from musical modulation only in degree, not in kind. Such is the immediate connection between language and music, that singing is the more expressive as it is founded on natural declamation. He who does not understand something of musical tone, and has not been accustomed to its variations, cannot fully know the principles of prosody and elocution. Music is a second language, whose dominion commences where that of speech terminates, but which, when associated with speech, imparts to it power, richness, and melody.

Music was an essential element of ancient elocution. The Greeks and Romans attached greater importance to the melody of language than modern nations. In their ordinary conversation pronunciation was governed by strict rules both of intonation and measure: accent determined the first; quantity, the second. "If, on the stage," says Cicero, "a word was pronounced too short or too slow, the whole theatre resounded with the disapprobation of the audience." * Quintilian observes that the Romans were early taught prosodiac distinctions. † Among them the science of harmony was not confined to singing and musical composition; it presided over the pronunciation and delivery of the reader, the actor, and even the orator. The celebrated Caius Gracchus never appeared on the rostrum without a musician who regulated his voice by the notes of a flute. In some of the Grecian cities, the common crier who published the laws appears to have been attended by a harper. The fulness of sound of the Greek and Latin words, their varied terminations,

* *De Orat.*, Lib. i. 60.

† *Inst. Orat.*, Lib. i. Cap. viii.

their bold inversions, and their modulated accentuation, greatly contributed to the harmony of ancient eloquence.

SECT. IV.—COMPARATIVE DIFFICULTY OF READING FRENCH AND ENGLISH.

It is especially in languages, the orthography and pronunciation of which conform to principles of analogy, that a few passages, perfectly read or recited, may serve as a standard for all others. And although, in French, the alphabetical characters do not always, when incorporated into words, correspond to the vocal elements of which they are the signs, yet, as already remarked, the same combinations of letters almost invariably represent the same articulate sounds; and the absence of a syllabic accent imparts so great a uniformity to the pronunciation, that there is not, perhaps, a language in which it could be known with more certainty from a mere inspection of the words. Hence any fifteen or twenty lines of a French book contain all the elements of pronunciation, and the correct reading of them may, by analogy, assist in pronouncing almost all other words. The fixity in the mode of representing sounds and intonations in French, as also in Italian, German, and Spanish, considerably facilitates the complete acquisition of their vocal elements, and proves the necessity which we have urged of attending carefully to the pronunciation of the first words which are heard. In the learning of a foreign language, the periodical lessons of a teacher not permitting the students to acquire its pronunciation altogether through the ear, as in the native tongue, they should have it in their power to infer the manner of pronouncing the new words they meet in books from those they have been taught to pronounce.

In English, the pronunciation presents endless difficulties, owing to the complete absence of analogy in its alphabetical representation; a foreigner would be constantly liable to error, who, naturally following the analogical principle, would pronounce in the same way words similarly spelt, as *but* and *put*, *done* and *tone*, *mature* and *nature*, *singer* and *finger*, *daughter* and *laughter*, *dove*, *cove* and *more*, *does*, *toes* and *shoes*, *beau*, *beauty*, *Beauchamp*, and a thousand other words dissimilarly pronounced although similarly composed. He requires to hear every word to know how it is pronounced. The English language is one of the easiest to be read mentally, and one of the most, if not the

most, difficult of all to be read orally: the same written syllable most capriciously represents various sounds; as in Chinese, the same words assume different significations by a change of vocal inflection; and the syllabic accent, to which no fixed place is assigned, produces differences of sounds which are not governed by any law,—a double irregularity most perplexing to foreigners. But another very great source of embarrassment, already noticed, is the inconsistency, peculiar to the British nation, of interlarding their discourse with foreign words, the original pronunciation of which they, by a still greater inconsistency, attempt to preserve, instead of adapting it, by rational analogy, to the usage of their own language. By this absurd practice, the great majority of the English people themselves have it not in their power to speak correctly, through ignorance of the pronunciation of the foreign languages from which the materials of *genteel* conversation are daily imported by fashionable travellers. Half the elementary sounds of the French language not existing in the English, it is obvious that persons unacquainted with the former language, that is, the great bulk of the British nation, must fail in their attempt to compete with a Parisian in pronouncing English words of French origin. It is not rare for well-educated English people to inquire of a French person how to pronounce words borrowed from the French and long naturalised in the English language; thus establishing this strange anomaly, that foreigners are authorities for a correct English pronunciation.

The extreme heterogeneous and capricious nature of the English pronunciation has given birth to pronouncing dictionaries, indispensable companions of the English who are desirous of speaking correctly, and who, without them, would find it impossible to tell the pronunciation of a word from its orthography, or its orthography from the way it is pronounced. The want of such works is not felt by the French, nor perhaps by any other people; the uniformity of their pronunciation precludes the necessity: all French words and syllables, with very few exceptions, are regulated by fixed principles. Hence it is that, although the English have nine new vocal elements to learn in French, and the French only two new ones to acquire in English, yet this language is, from the irregularity of its pronunciation and accent, far more difficult to the French, than is the French pronunciation to the English. The double difficulty of pronouncing English and of understanding it when spoken will be an obstacle to that language becoming a very general vehicle of communication among

nations. Its use will, out of Great Britain, remain limited to those on whom it is forced by the right of conquest or the spirit of colonisation: these limits, however, may well satisfy a nation's pride; for the by-gone boast of Philip II. of Spain, that the sun never set upon his dominions, truly applies to the vast territories in which the English language is spoken.

BOOK X.

THIRD BRANCH—SPEAKING.

"Ici l'application serait meilleure que les règles, les exemples instruiraient mieux que les préceptes."—BUFFON.*

"Savoir par cœur n'est pas savoir."—MONTAIGNE. †

CHAPTER I.

PHRASEOLOGY.

SECT. I.—EXERCISE IN PHRASE-MAKING.

THE arts of speaking and writing a foreign language, although considerably facilitated by the practice of the first two branches —reading and hearing—could never be completely acquired from them alone: they demand particular exercises for their acquisition. But, before we explain the method by which they are learned, we will observe that a knowledge of grammar is an efficient auxiliary in gaining and securing their complete possession. In treating of the first two branches, little mention has been made of grammar, because the study of it is of little assistance towards their attainment: it is only when a learner begins to express ideas in the foreign language that rules may be considered useful. Practice and theory will mutually aid each other, if grammar be studied concurrently with exercises in speaking and writing. It may also be observed that a material difference exists between these two arts in their mode of acquisition: as the audible signs of the spoken language must be acquired through the ear, the assistance of a teacher becomes indispensable;

* *Discours de Réception à l'Académie.* † *Essais*, Liv. i. Ch. 25.

but the visible symbols of the written language, which are best acquired through the eye, permit a learner capable of self-direction to dispense with an assistant.

We have shown, in treating of the acquisition of reading and hearing, that, whilst the learner's improvement in the first solely depends on his own efforts and perseverance, progress in the second results from the unremitting exertions of the instructor—attention being sufficient on the part of the learner. Different from these two branches, the third—speaking—requires the active co-operation of master and pupil. Information and skill are as necessary in the former, as industry and perseverance in the latter. Each, as will be seen, performs an active part throughout the various exercises required for attaining this art.

It has been remarked that combined, not detached words, should be the aim of learners; and the method which we recommend for initiating them into the art of speaking was adverted to in explaining how the different species of words should be learned. We refer our readers to Book VII., Ch. II., Sec. III., for the principles on which rests the exercise of phrase-making, into which we will now minutely enter.

The words of the Second Class are, as already shown, the first to be acquired in a foreign language. They should be successively combined with substantives, adjectives, or verbs, so as to form intelligent phrases. But, as a few substantives and adjectives are sufficient for effecting these combinations, none need, at first, be committed to memory—the teacher, in proposing to his pupils sentences in the native tongue to be rendered into the foreign, supplies them with such as express familiar ideas conjointly with words of the Second Class. The verbs must, at the outset, be thoroughly learned, as they are indispensable for the expression of thought. In the combinations into which they enter they should form, as it were, the centre round which all the other words may be grouped in their respective places. The formation of phrases is interesting and useful, only when definite ideas are expressed; and this cannot be effected without verbs. Such is the importance of this part of speech, that he who knows a verb thoroughly and can apply it in all circumstances, knows how to speak.

In the beginning, one verb only should be practised at each sitting, after it has been studied by the learners. The instructor questions them promiscuously, changing each time the mood, tense, person, and form, and occasionally introducing useful

nouns or pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, or adverbs, which, with the verb, form complete propositions. In French, for example, he makes them combine with *avoir* a few familiar substantives preceded by determinatives, as *le tems, une tasse de thé, mon livre, sa plume,* &c.; past participles in common use —*diné, étudié, lu, dit,* &c., such words as *quelque chose, faim, soif, raison, tort, peur,* &c.; with *être* various adjectives, such phrases as *à diner, à la maison, chez moi, chez lui, chez vous,* &c., past participles of neuter verbs, as *allé, venu, arrivé, sorti,* &c.; with *parler* the names of languages—*français, anglais, italien,* &c. adverbs of quantity—*beaucoup, peu, trop,* &c. pronouns—*me, lui, nous,* &c., before the verb, prepositions—*de, avec, après, contre,* &c., followed by nouns or the pronouns *moi, toi, lui, elle,* &c., &c. Each new word given to the pupils may be incorporated in as many sentences as the teacher thinks requisite to engrave it in their memory. Thus, this exercise is rendered interesting to them by variety, their vocabulary is daily enriched, and they are prepared for the numberless modifications which expressions undergo in conversation.

The phrases should, at first, be very simple, and constructed on the principle of analogy. Their brevity and similarity would permit him to multiply their number, and render familiar, by repetition, the words of which they are composed. At a more advanced stage, when the formation of complicated sentences becomes desirable, the difficulties arising from the difference of genius in the two languages may be removed by presenting to the attention of learners various model-phrases in the foreign idiom, which, while they familiarise them with the spoken language, will serve as guides to arrive, by the analogical process, at the unknown phraseology. So, in following the natural method, a child, in his own language, constantly forms phrases he never heard, by those which he has heard, and which serve him as models; he modifies, by analogy, the expressions he acquires by imitation. On imitation and analogy is also founded the phrase-making exercise now recommended.

Learners will receive further assistance in overcoming the difficulty of complicated sentences, by being made to pass gradually from the simplest form of the verb, through successive modifications, to such expressions as embarrass them. If, for example, the French of the sentence, *Will you not tell it to me?* be asked of a learner who hesitates to answer, let him find it by means of the following questions: Question, To tell? Answer,

Dire.—Q. I will tell ? A. Je dirai.—Q. You will tell ? A. Vous direz.—Q. Will you tell ? A. Direz-vous.—Q. Will you tell it ? A. Le direz-vous.—Q. Will you tell it to me ? A. Me le direz-vous.—Q. Will you not tell it to me ? A. Ne me le direz-vous pas. By this analytical process, the learner may by himself solve such difficulties, and easily pass from the known to the unknown.

The elements of the sentences which the learners form, having been, for the most part, previously learned and pronounced in imitation of the teacher, their attention may be directed exclusively to the manner of combining them, an exercise which is to all the members of a class a trial of skill likely to excite emulation and keep up mental activity ;—every successful performance is matter of triumph. However, if they hesitate, they should be at once assisted, either by recalling to their memory the model-phrase, or stating the grammatical rule which governs it, as al· ı by constructing for them part or the whole of the sentences proposed. "Whenever," says Locke, "they are at a stand, and are willing to go forward, help them presently over the difficulty, without any rebuke or chiding, remembering that where harsher means are taken, they are the effect only of pride and peevishness in the teacher, who expects children should instantly be masters of as much as he knows, whereas he should rather consider that his business is to settle in them habits, not angrily to inculcate rules." * If seasonable assistance be afforded to the learners, more sentences will be formed in any given time, the grammatical construction of the foreign language will the sooner become familiar, and the words will be learned with their proper pronunciation by being repeatedly heard from the instructor.

The practice of phrase-making should, in the commencement, be confined to a very limited number of words, and to phrases expressive of very familiar ideas, the chief object then being to learn how they may be applied in conversation. "To exercise the judgment and invention, and to afford young people opportunities of applying whatever knowledge they acquire, should be the constant endeavour of those who undertake the cultivation of their minds. *Half* the knowledge with *twice* the power of applying it, is better than twice the knowledge with only half the power of applying it." †

The questions can easily be made to suit the different degrees of proficiency of the learners, because the exercise of extem-

* *Thoughts on Education.*

† R. L. Edgeworth, *Essays on Professional Education.*

poraneous phrase-making always permits the difficulty to be adapted to their progressive improvement. It commences with phrases of two words,—a substantive and its determinative, a preposition and its object, an adjective and its substantive, a verb and its subject; afterwards, by adding to the verb an object, then an adverb, complete sentences are offered to the pupils for construction. Such sentences, when rendered easy by practice, may be lengthened by the introduction of two or more subjects, objects, attributes, or circumstances of time, place, manner, or quantity. When the formation of these complex-phrases has become familiar, and when the learners have a command of verbs, such as *to hope, to think, to perceive, to know, to say, to remember*, which may be followed by any other verb, or any two which easily combine, as *to look for* and *to find, to ask* and *to answer, to pay* and *to owe, to offer* and *to take*, two propositions may be joined into one by means of a conjunction or a relative pronoun. Learners, thus progressively undertaking more complicated sentences, and daily experiencing more facility in forming them, cannot but feel conscious of their own progress; this consciousness of improvement is their best reward for past labour, and their greatest stimulus to future exertion.

The phrases which the instructor proposes for construction may be varied at pleasure, and their subject adapted to the wants and tastes of the learners. At one time, their succession assumes the form of a dialogue, in which a familiar exchange of thoughts is carried on, in imitation of that which takes place in social intercourse. At another time, the pupils exercise their powers of analogy and invention, by expressing ideas of their own, and forming the phraseology entirely themselves. Having been given a verb, and being informed of some of its idiomatic applications, they combine with it other words, so as to express a variety of familiar ideas. As they advance they are asked, in the foreign language itself, various questions illustrative of the verb which is in course of practice; and by bare substitution of the affirmative or negative form for the interrogative used by the teacher, they can give the answers in the very words and idiomatical or syntactical construction of the questions. The interest thus imparted to exercises founded on imitation and analogy, will soon give learners facility in forming sentences expressive of their own thoughts, and ability to sustain conversation.

It is particularly in living languages that the exercise in phraseology presents great facilities; for the teacher can always

supply from his own resources abundant materials. If he be a man of education, and a native of the country the language of which he teaches, he can generally determine, without reference to books, the forms of expression which are admissible and the precise ideas which, in different cases, are attached to words. A person teaching a language not his own, can find in works belonging to it an endless variety of useful expressions which he may use as a ground-work for exercising his pupils in phraseology. But this mode of proceeding would require, on their part, previous knowledge of all the conjugations, to have it in their power readily to form phraseological variations on the verbs as they accidentally occur in the text. See next Chapter, Sect. v., for the use of books as auxiliaries to the phrase-making exercise.

SECT. II.—ANALYTICAL AND SYNTHETICAL APPLICATION OF GRAMMAR TO SPEAKING.

The exercise of phrase-making, requiring of learners to decompose model-phrases in order to construct similar ones, is a successful application of the analytical or inductive method. It is a double exercise of judgment, in which they decline, conjugate, illustrate the rules of grammar, in short, analyse the thought and its expression. It may be made, by a judicious instructor, the source of much grammatical information to his pupils. If he bring to their notice the place and the functions which the various words assume in the sentence, it will enable them to establish clear distinctions between different parts of speech, and to see the relations which exist between them. If he occasionally assist them in adding *prefixes* and *affixes* to primitive words, and show them how the sense of these primitive words is preserved and modified throughout their derivatives in diversified phraseology, they will acquire just notions of compound terms, and the power of multiplying expressions according to their wants.

When many analogous phrases have been constructed, learners should be led to observe their points of similarity; and, ascending from particulars to generals, should state the principles which govern their construction. Thus the rules of grammar will be gradually learned, as suggested by the functions of words, their inflections, and mutual dependence. These rules, inferred from the numerous phrases that illustrate them, being the result of the learner's own reflection and experience, will be easily remem-

bered and applied. Should they escape the memory for a time, they may be retraced through the analogy and association by which they were formed.

The phraseology being at the option of the instructor, he always has it in his power to direct the attention of his pupils to the forms of speech the grammatical principles of which he wishes them to infer. But, to afford them early an opportunity of speaking idiomatically, we would recommend that, in general, preference be given to the expressions which differ in construction in the two languages, or which may illustrate some principle peculiar to the foreign idiom. He should, as much as possible, select model-phrases, or compose the native ones which he submits to his pupils for translation into the foreign language in such a manner that the principal facts under all the rules of grammar may be through them elicited and generalised in succession; and the variations of each illustration should be so multiplied as to render the syntactical forms habits of the mind. In this practical and inductive way the whole syntax of the foreign language may be made clear, intelligible, and familiar.

Should the instructor wish to lead his pupils methodically through a course of grammatical phraseology, let him select one of the standard foreign grammars published with exercises annexed to the rules, and avail himself, in their regular order, of these exercises, by modifying diversely the phrases which they contain;—the tediousness and difficulty attendant on writing them are obviated when performed orally with an assistant. He may also introduce other sentences, as he thinks they are required, and persevere in varying the illustrations until his pupils can infer the rule readily and apply it unconsciously. The multiplicity of oral variations, indispensable for creating habits of language, will make up for the paucity of examples to which the written grammatical exercises are necessarily confined.

If, for example, a great diversity of sentences be formed on each French verb requiring either *à* or *de* after it (a list of such verbs is given in most French grammars), the perplexity which these prepositions present will soon disappear by that practice; and learners will use them, as it were, instinctively by the force of habit and analogy, as is done by the natives themselves. The use of the subjunctive and the rule of the participles in French can be mastered only through this phraseological process. In the same way also practical acquaintance with the genders of

nouns would be easily gained in languages which, like the French, attribute to the names of inanimate objects a masculine or feminine, devoid of any distinctive mark by which it can be known, and whose articles and adjectives vary in their form to indicate their concord with the substantives: by frequently presenting to the learner substantives preceded by articles and other determinatives, or joined to various adjectives, associations would be formed in his mind which would enable him to use the proper gender spontaneously and unconsciously. In this manner all the grammatical forms of a language would soon be rendered familiar, and all idiomatical difficulties overcome.

Conformably to the dictates of nature and reason, a learner, whether a child or an adult, should postpone entering upon a regular synthetical course of grammatical studies until he has made some progress in the first two branches and has mastered many words, especially those of the second class and the verbs. Once in possession of a large supply of materials with which to illustrate rules, as he learns them, he will find the study of a standard grammar both interesting and profitable. Had he learned the grammar of the foreign language before he could apply its rules, he would have forgotten them by the time they would be required for practice.

As a learner studies each rule he ought to be exercised in modifying, in the manner detailed above, the examples which are given in the grammar in support of it, and which then serve as model-phrases. The better also to understand the rule, and ensure its practical application, he should, under the direction of the professor and subject to his correction, form numerous sentences of his own illustrative of it, and persevere in these illustrations until he has acquired readiness in them. When, on account of his youth, his reflective powers are not equal to the abstractions of grammar, the teacher should himself explain it, as he finds needful. Young people, listening to his oral explanations, would attend to the ideas more than to the words, whereas they usually labour more to retain words than to understand their meaning, when desired to get the same information from books.

In these illustrations the learner proceeds synthetically, by *deduction*, from the rules to the phraseology: it is the counterpart of that useful exercise in generalisation in which the learner passes, by *induction*, from the phraseology to the grammatical principles. The benefits arising from these two opposite

exercises, and from thus alternately attending to practice and theory, must be obvious.

Rules should not, at any time, be committed to memory: if they are well understood, and if they assist in the expression of thought, the object is gained. Real knowledge of grammar consists, not in repeating, but in applying rules, and observing them in practice without retrospective consideration of them. In speaking or writing a foreign language we ought to be able, as in the native, to ascertain the right pronunciation, orthography, gender, inflection, grammatical concord, and order of words, by an appeal to our consciousness of their correctness, resulting from reiterated impressions rather than to our recollection of rules. A learner would not possess greater fluency of speech after having recited the whole grammar than before he commenced this laborious task. On the frequent, diversified, and just application of principles depend facility and correctness in speaking and writing the language. The frequency of the applications and the diversity of examples secure the double advantage of exercising at the same time the understanding and imagination. To illustrate the rules demands more reflection than a monotonous repetition of them, and thus leaves deeper and more lasting impressions on the mind. It is in this manner that synthesis, by generalising the phraseology acquired through analysis and practice, fixes it permanently in the memory.

SECT. III.—ON THE POWER OF THINKING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE WHEN SPEAKING IT.

If the exercise of phraseology, which has now been minutely explained, be long persevered in, conjointly with reading and hearing, it will give great command of language to the learner, who then will not have to depend on accidental recollection of school-book phrases. Constantly expressing ideas by combinations formed of the same words necessarily associates them in the mind with those words; and, by the law of habit, this exercise becomes so easy, that the phrases which at first demand much reflection, are at last produced instantaneously, unconsciously, and as the immediate expressions of the ideas which call them forth. This direct association of the ideas with the foreign phrases which the learner utters, is the third stage in mental language, that which we call *mental speaking*. It is

only when we possess the power by which the thoughts come forth intuitively embodied in the words to which we give utterance, that we can be said to speak the foreign language, that the lips become "parcel of the mind."

In the oral expression of thought words should flow in their proper order, not by the aid of reasoning, but instantaneously from a sentiment of analogy and as the immediate consequence of the thought. In fact, the foreign language should be used like the native, in which the ideas and signs invariably recall each other.

Direct association of words and ideas is indispensable in the audible expression of thought. Translation in speaking would be attended with the same inconvenience which, we have before observed, is attached to it in reading and hearing. Speaking by translation must be very imperfect, from the want of identically corresponding terms in the two languages. Its tediousness but ill accommodates itself to the impatience of hearers, to whom it must be even painful to witness the embarrassment which the speaker experiences in translating.

Desirable as undoubtedly is the power of reading or writing without translating, yet it may, in some cases, be thought only a matter of convenience, since the person who reads or writes may devote as much time as he pleases to the translation; but, in colloquial intercourse, no time is allowed for this operation; and, unless hearing and speaking be direct, that is, independent of translation, there can be no genuine conversation.

The interruption caused by translation in the succession of thoughts is not favourable to argumentative or continued discourse. It can, at best, only answer for unconnected propositions. But one of its greatest disadvantages is, that the speaker, intent on finding words as interpreters of other words, is, in the expression of his thoughts and sentiments, prevented from yielding to his feelings; he is unable fully to convey to the hearer's mind the impressions which influence his own; he is destitute of that eloquence of the heart from which spring all the charms of social intercourse. The simple manifestation of emotion will, by the power of sympathy, excite similar emotion in those who witness it, even although a single word may not be uttered; but in one who speaks by translation, we behold a man exclusively engaged in an exercise of the intellect;—how can such an exhibition call forth sympathy with feelings which are hidden from our view? The mind must be entirely free from such pre-occupation, to

cause, by its direct and spontaneous influence, the inflection of the voice and the expression of the face to manifest internal emotions. The tone, the echo of the heart, is mute, and the countenance, its mirror, is dull, if the soul remains passive during the act of speaking.

To the sympathetic effects of the language of action on our impressible minds in infancy, we are indebted for our first progress in the maternal language; we must, in our turn, bring it into play, if we wish to render our conversation intelligible and interesting to others. Let us then avoid translation, that we may speak spontaneously and naturally,—that every feeling may be expressed by a tone and look, which will awaken in others the feeling that gave them birth. These two natural modes of expression should be in harmony with the sentiments conveyed by the words uttered. Were it otherwise, there would be no appearance of truth or earnestness in audible expression, and language would be deprived of the power of carrying conviction to the mind or delight to the soul. It would then indeed be what Talleyrand called it,—"the means of concealing our thoughts."

The simplest phrase may present great variety of meanings, and even opposite meanings, according to the particular emphasis which is given to its words separately, or the particular tones and looks which accompany the delivery of the whole. From the inadequate number of words and their multiplied acceptations, expressions would be liable to frequent misinterpretations, if inflections of voice and changes of countenance did not supply their deficiencies. These natural symbols of our feelings vary with the kind and degree of sensation under which the ideas are expressed. Truth or fiction, seriousness or irony, pain or pleasure, pity, love, anger, all possible states of the mind and heart, from the softest emotions to the most violent passions, find, in tone and look combined, a language more expressive and eloquent than the lips can utter. "There is not less eloquence," says La Rochefoucauld, "in the tone of voice, in the eye and countenance of the person who speaks, than in the choice of words." * "I have seen an eye," says Addison, "curse for half an hour together, and an eye-brow call a man a scoundrel." †

The exercise in phrase-making, which is addressed to the understanding, and connects in the mind the idea with its expression, favours the adoption of appropriate tone and look, and does

* *Maximes.* † *Spectator*, No. 86.

away with the sing-song assumed in reciting mnemonic lessons, in which the attention is directed to words rather than to ideas. But, the sooner to avail himself of these natural auxiliaries, a learner should, in the interval of the lessons, form variations in phraseology on the verbs which he has last practised with his instructor, on the idiomatic phrases which are most familiar to him, or on useful expressions selected from a standard work; taking care to use only the words which he is sure to pronounce correctly, and the construction which he perfectly understands. He should, whilst going through these variations, avoid conceiving first the ideas in his own language, only think of the things meant by the foreign words as he utters them; he should continue illustrating the same foreign idiom, until it has grown so familiar as to become a spontaneous sign of the idea which it signifies. The reiteration of the same words and phrases, thus used as direct representatives of thought, and uttered with suitable tones, will soon enable him to think in the foreign language. But this will be the more easily and the more effectually accomplished, if the learner, conforming to the order prescribed by reason in the successive acquisition of the different departments of a foreign language, has, previously to speaking it, habitually associated the ideas with the words by *mental reading* and *mental audition*.

Whether the phraseology be practised with the teacher, or in his absence, mental speaking will be the sooner attained if the words which enter into the composition of sentences, and the order in which they ought to be placed are, at the time of practice, so thoroughly known that the learner needs no effort to recollect them; for it is obvious that the elements of speech must be the more readily distributed into their various syntactical arrangements, as the mind is more free from considerations of language: our discourse becomes really audible thought only from the moment we exclusively attend to ideas while speaking. This being once effected, it requires but little practice to ensure the power of carrying on a silent train of thinking in the foreign language.

To speak is to *think aloud*, and to think is to *speak mentally*. We must have spoken by thinking aloud before we can think by speaking mentally; that is, we must have given utterance to our thoughts and feelings before we can use words to carry on silently in the mind a train of ideas. Such is the slow and gradual development of the intellectual powers, that words cannot be applied

to the working of the mind, until they are firmly united to the thought by long habit in its audible expression. "The child must feel before he speaks," says Rivarol, "but he must speak before he thinks." *

The speaking exercises recommended in the 3rd Chapter of this Book will further aid in acquiring the direct expression of thought.

SECT. IV.—BENEFITS OF THE PHRASEOLOGICAL EXERCISE.

A learner who assiduously practises phrase-making in expressing ideas of his own, or those which are proposed to him by his teacher, has frequent opportunities of *thinking aloud* in the foreign language; and the habits of association between ideas and words, thus formed orally, will soon enable him to *speak mèntally* in that language, that is, use it for carrying on silently a train of thought. Constant intercourse with the people whose language he is learning would undoubtedly be the most favourable for acquiring completely the power of making it the direct vehicle of his ideas; but, when that intercourse does not exist, a good substitute for it is found in the constant formation of sentences conformably to the analogical process explained above.

If it be considered that a verb in all its tenses, simple and compound, and in its various forms, active, passive, and reflective, affirmative, interrogative, and negative, presents above a thousand distinct propositions, it will clearly appear that, by successively joining to it other elements of speech, inexhaustible variety of expressions may be produced. Every new verb introduces a new series of ideas, and opens a boundless field of practice. Materials for conversation, thus multiplied indefinitely, provide for all the requirements of social communication.

The model-phrase becomes, by slight additions and substitutions, the generator of others in endless variety. Changing the words of the Second Class produces different modifications of the same idea; and varying those of the First Class produces different ideas in similar circumstances. The thought undergoes at pleasure endless metamorphoses; and the vocal organs acquire corresponding flexibility. In this manner analogy extends the power of expression, and successively embraces the diversity of phrases and ideas; it leads, by imperceptible steps, from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex. A

* *De l'Universalité de la Langue Française.*

skilful instructor can bring at will, and within the compass of a lesson, any topic of ordinary conversation ; he can familiarise his pupils with all intricate forms of speech, and enable them to gain more extensive command of expression than could be obtained from the limited phraseology to which they would be confined by premature colloquial intercourse in the foreign language.

By committing a phrase to memory the student learns only that phrase ; but by constructing one himself, he learns both the phrase and the rule by which it is formed : in the first case he repeats, in the second he speaks. By learning dialogues he only tries to retain foreign phrases corresponding to the native, without having occasion to inquire into the genius of either language ; whilst the practice of phrase-making obliges him to compare the construction of the two languages,—one of the great objects proposed from the study of a second language. It brings into action the faculty of reasoning as well as that of memory ; for the analogy by which every sentence is formed is a logical process with its premisses and consequences ;—it is a species of rule of three, in which the fourth term of a proportion is to be discovered. The learner, for example, being told that the English phrase, *I behave very well,* is rendered into French by *je me comporte très bien*, will easily infer what must be the French for other expressions formed with the same verb, as *you behave very well, how do you behave ? he does not behave quite well,* &c. ; or what must be the French for similarly formed expressions with different verbs, as *I walk very far, I get up very late, I am very well,* &c., the corresponding French verbs, *se promener, se lever, se porter,* being similarly conjugated. The solution of these questions is a logical consequence to him who knows the verbs and the other words which enter into the composition of these phrases.

The exercise in phraseology, making young persons apply their knowledge of verbs to speaking, and thus early enabling them to reap the fruit of their study, must convince them of the practical utility of this important part of speech, and induce them to bestow on it the attention which it claims. It cannot fail also to interest them ; for it gratifies their love of novelty ; it enables a teacher to present to them ever-varying ideas by means of the infinite modifications which the verbs can be made to undergo, and by the incessant introduction of new words. It is favourable to the principle of repetition, so important in instruction ; because words already known, which if repeated by

themselves would produce weariness, become interesting when variously combined for the expression of thought. This repetition of the same words, uttered in imitation of the teacher and subject to his correction, tends also to render their pronunciation natural and habitual.

Not only does the exercise in phrase-making introduce a learner to the art of speaking, and afford him every facility for improvement when with his teacher, but it is equally useful as a means of self-instruction. The practice of forming variations on the phraseology of standard popular works would enable a proficient to keep up and even extend his power of direct expression in the foreign idiom, in the absence of a teacher or of persons with whom he can converse. This exercise occasionally attended to, conjointly with mental reading, would secure, to the latest period of life, the practical knowledge once acquired of a foreign language.

The practice of phrase-making may be as profitable in public as in private instruction: not a moment is lost to any member of a well-disciplined class. Each question, although addressed to only one person at a time, is listened to with interest by all those who are desirous of improvement; because the answer to it not having been previously committed to memory, they may all silently compete in the solution with those who are questioned by the instructor. Should even some of the class not endeavour mentally to construct the phrases proposed to others, still they would derive profit by hearing them formed, as the opportunity is afforded them of exercising their imitative powers in circumstances resembling those under which a child acquires the maternal idiom. They not only learn these various expressions similarly constructed, but, under the force of example, acquire the art of forming others by analogy.

Interesting, however, as the exercise may be, it would, if continued long, fatigue the attention, particularly at an early stage of learning when mental effort is required. At the first symptoms of weariness, therefore, it should be stopped and made to alternate with its counterpart,—practice in hearing; for, in these two exercises, the occupation of master and pupil, when together, should chiefly consist.

The better to secure the continual attention of all the members of a large class, the professor should not examine them in any fixed order; he should occasionally call upon individuals out of what may appear to be their turn. Among other means of

correcting the listlessness of young learners, we would suggest a practice adopted in some schools on the continent. It consists in having the names of the pupils written on separate cards which the teacher holds. Having mixed these, he reads from the foreign text the phrases to be translated into the native tongue, or forms the expressions in the native which are to be turned into the foreign; he then successively, in the order of the cards, calls upon the learners to answer. As often as all the members of the class have answered, or oftener, if the professor thinks proper, the cards are mixed again; and thus they are questioned in a different order. In this manner all the learners, being in constant expectation of being called, attend to every question.

CHAPTER II.

MNEMONIC EXERCISES.

SECT. I.—OF DIALOGUES.

OF all mnemonic exercises, dialogues are perhaps the least useful: they not only fail to cultivate the judgment, but are even inadequate to the wants of conversation However extensive each dialogue, and however numerous those which the learner has committed to memory, they can convey but a very limited circle of ideas, beyond which he loses all power of expression; because, unexercised in forming phrases analogous to those which they contain, he cannot, when conversing, modify the words, change their order, or substitute one term for another, so as to make them supply the incidental wants of social intercourse. We learn to speak, not by repeating, but by forming phrases.

The case of a person learning dialogues is somewhat similar to that which, in a well-known story, is told of a man in the service of Frederick the Great. Whenever this monarch perceived a new soldier in his guards, he never failed to ask him these three questions, How old are you? How long have you been in my service? Do you regularly receive your pay and rations? A Frenchman, about twenty-two years old, who did not know a word of German, had just been admitted into that corps; and, aware of the three questions which would be put to him by the King, had learned by rote three appropriate answers in the usual order of the questions. Shortly after, Frederick, reviewing his guards, remarked this soldier and did not fail to address him; but unfortunately he on this occasion changed the order of his questions, and began by the second: "How long have you been in my service?" "Please your Majesty, twenty-two years." The King surprised at an answer which accorded so little with the youthful appearance of the soldier, asked, "How old are you then?"—"Three months, sire,"—"I fear," added Frederick, with

astonishment, "one of us has lost his senses."—"Both exactly," unhesitatingly replied the young man, who took these last words of the King for the third question.

The mnemonic process of dialogues is not less pernicious to the understanding of a learner, than to his improvement in the language: he is made the tame repeater of another's ideas, instead of being called upon to express his own. His power of conversing is regulated by the whim and peculiar notions of the compiler; it is dependent on the recollection of dialogues, the greater number of which are deficient in the words and subjects which actually occur in society.

It is obvious that the arts of speaking and writing depend not so much on the recollection of a large number of ready-made sentences, as on a command of useful words and the power of arranging them spontaneously into expressions suited to the ever-changing circumstances of social intercourse. These arts depend more on judgment than on memory. Analogy, the power through the instrumentality of which they are acquired, is, therefore, in the expression of thought, more effective than mere recollection of phraseology: its acquisitions are without bounds; those of memory are extremely limited in their application.

No two games of chess or of whist, perhaps, were ever played throughout perfectly alike. It would be absurd to suppose that conversation, composed of infinitely more elements than either, should, in the different situations of social life, present exactly the same words and the same combinations. In apparently similar situations, there are numberless circumstances which militate against the recurrence of the same facts or ideas. How can it be supposed that a dialogue, for example, between a lady and a milliner—written most likely by a person little conversant with female attire—could serve as a model of conversation between all ladies and all milliners, despite the changes of fashion, and whatever be the season of the year, the dispositions, ages, wants, habits, taste, wealth of the parties, and innumerable other circumstances? Very little, indeed, of the trash which fills the generality of phrase-books could find its place in practical life. The hundreds of dialogues which young martyrs are forced to learn by rote never enable them to speak on any subject. They teach them *to repeat*, not *to converse*. However, those who are so tormented are generally spared the trouble of trying if the dialogues they learn can be adapted to any parti-

cular case ; for they completely forget them long before they have occasion to turn them to account.

The foreign dramas which tyros are sometimes made to commit to memory and perform at yearly examinations in public schools, may be viewed in the same light as dialogues. They possess the same defects and some evil tendencies besides ;— they foster in young people an inordinate taste for theatricals, excite love of display, and, worse than all, make them parties to an imposition on their parents. These mnemonic exhibitions may, by a show of elocution, draw public favour to the establishments ; but they are, by no means, profitable to the young performers. Could, we ask of every reflecting person, could the ability to repeat a scene, nay, the whole of Shakspeare's plays, impart to a foreigner the power of conversing in English on the most ordinary topics of every-day life ? The art of reciting or of quoting and the art of speaking are completely distinct.

If dialogues or dramatic compositions could teach to speak with ease or correctness, actors, who spend their lives in learning and reciting the best of them, should have greatly the advantage over other people in conversation and in public speaking ; but we are not aware that they enjoy any superiority in these respects. If they excel other men, it can only be in the power of committing to memory and the art of reciting passages of authors. We allude here to the generality of actors ; for it must be admitted that there are in the profession a few highly gifted individuals who, having received a liberal education, and being, as gentlemen and scholars, admitted to the first circles, have the same means as other educated persons of acquiring the capability of expressing themselves with correctness and elegance.

SECT. II.—THE ADOPTION OF DIALOGUES ACCOUNTED FOR.

That the truth of the foregoing remarks has been overlooked in the teaching of living languages, that the senseless dialogue-learning has prevailed, and will probably long prevail, cannot be wondered at, when we reflect that the great majority of English persons who teach a foreign language, not knowing it perfectly, must find it safer and more convenient to have recourse to ready-made phrases, than to venture on an extempore exercise which may bring them into difficulties. As to foreigners who, in their teaching novitiate, are unacquainted

with the language of their pupils, they cannot follow the process of phraseology, which demands great command of that language. Dialogues, on the contrary, presenting corresponding phrases in the two idioms, and thus supplying their deficiency, must be to them a ready means of commencing the work of tuition; they resort to them the more willingly as the juxta-position of these phrases acquaints them with those which they ignore, while their pupils are attempting to learn the others. Persevering for some time in this practice, confirms them in a routine of teaching which, by force of habit, renders the adoption of another course every day more difficult. Few people are either able, or willing, to abandon a beaten track, in order to explore unknown grounds and try experiments in education. If, however, the teaching of foreign languages were attended, as it ought to be, with respect and profit, things would be otherwise; many would prepare for it at home before undertaking it abroad.

In condemnation of the injudicious practice of dialogue-learning, we will again advert to the fallacies on which it rests, by recording the words of an eminent grammarian. Chambaud has thus accounted for the introduction of French vocabularies and dialogues into schools: "The generality of people," he says, "being incapable of reflecting duly on the nature of a language and the faculties of the human mind, have hardly put their children to the study of the French language, but they expect them to speak it; and, in case they do not, they never fail to tax the master either with incapacity or neglect of his business.

"The masters, on the other hand, being at a loss how to satisfy these unreasonable expectations, and not knowing what to contrive for forwarding their boys, presently begin by making them learn words, dialogues, and phrases; and labour hard to beat into their heads as many common sentences as they can, pretty nearly after the same manner as parrots are taught; and the absurdity is even carried so far in some schools, as to confine the poor boys, under all sorts of penalties and punishments, to the talking nothing else but French; the consequence of which is, they acquire the knack of talking a gibberish which nobody can make anything of. The ignorant parents, charmed, however, with the show their children make of their learning, think them great proficients in the French tongue."*

* *French Grammar*, Preface.

These remarks of Chambaud, although of old date, are applicable at the present day. But we go farther and maintain that French cannot be the language of any establishment in which the instructors and the majority of boarders are not French, or do not use the idiom as their own. It is quite preposterous to suppose that young persons unacquainted with a language will at all converse in it, when not under the eyes of their instructors. Parents would do well to pause ere they give implicit credit to public advertisements announcing that "French is the language of the school." Boys and girls in the school-room must be silent, if they have lessons to prepare or instruction to receive from their teachers; and, when at their sports, can it be supposed that they will prefer a language very imperfectly known to one which is familiar to them?

Whether in schools or in families, young learners should not be urged to speak a foreign language among themselves, when, as yet, they know it but very imperfectly; it would only reduce them to silence and impede the development of their minds. It would tend to inspire them with dislike for the study of that language and, what is worse, would inflict on them the necessity of practising fraud; because, in the absence of those who impose the task, they would most probably resort to their own language. Were they even to submit to so injudicious a practice, the barbarous jargon talked among themselves would give them bad habits of phraseology and pronunciation, of which they would afterwards find it difficult to divest themselves.

SECT. III.—OF MNEMONIC LESSONS.

The practice sometimes adopted of making children commit to memory portions of standard works as a preparation for speaking a foreign language, is more inconsistent with the end proposed, and more absurd, perhaps, than the learning of dialogues. It is, in fact, a mental operation altogether different from the act of expressing one's own thoughts: speaking consists in associating words with the ideas as they arise in the mind, whereas learning by rote consists merely in associating words with each other on the principle of local contiguity: incessant change of words and phraseology characterises the one; immutability of form and order is the essence of the other. In speaking, the attention is intent chiefly on ideas; in repeating, it is intent only on words;

in the former the words are subsequent to the ideas, in the latter the ideas are subsequent to the words—very often they are not taken into consideration at all:—there is nothing so common with children as to repeat what they do not in the least understand.

The practice of committing to memory passages of foreign authors at an early period of the study necessarily fosters a most defective pronunciation; for, in learning by rote, the child usually utters the words as rapidly as he can, to connect them in his mind by the accidental association of order and place. He thus mutters the same passage over and over, until it is mechanically retained; and, in this careless utterance, ignorant as he is of the foreign sounds, every syllable becomes an error, and every error is repeated until confirmed into inveterate habit. J. J. Rousseau condemns the practice even in the native tongue: what must be its consequences in a language of which the sound of every syllable is unknown to the learner?

Memory cannot be exercised and improved generally: learning pieces of prose or poetry by rote increases, it is true, its power, but it does so within certain limits, and in a manner inconsistent with the future wants of the learners, as has been explained in reference to the learning of a vocabulary. (See Book VII. Ch. II.) It produces no other advantage but that of imparting facility in committing to memory other pieces of prose or poetry. It would not enable a person to remember better the subject of what he reads and hears, or the practical details of business in active life; it cannot, in fact, be of any service except to one destined to be an actor, or more anxious to parrot discourses in public assemblies than to deliver them extempore.

Jacotot falls into a most unaccountable error in his system of "Universal Teaching," founded on mnemonic repetition. He unhesitatingly attributes to it the effects which exclusively belong to reflection and judgment; and this confusion of ideas constitutes the radical error of his method. The principles from which he starts may be good, although we doubt the correctness of some of them, but the extreme to which he carries their application destroys the benefit that might be expected from them. *

Constantly repeating the same thing, as he recommends, produces no other effect than to make the recitation easier and more

* The fundamental principles of Jacotot's system are these four:—*All intellects are equal; Learn something thoroughly and refer everything else to it; All is in all; We can teach what we know not.*

rapid! but this facility and rapidity are obstacles to the exercise of judgment. The power of reflection loses all command over words and actions rendered habitual by repetition. "External movements," says Degérando, "thus converted into habit by frequent repetition, are no longer confined to rapid obedience of our will; they anticipate it—they are even reproduced in spite of it."* The child who repeats by rote would find it a difficult matter to arrest his attention on the particulars of what he has committed to memory; and, consequently, this exercise leaves on the mind no information available for conversation. The task becomes still more irksome and prejudicial when, in conformity with Jacotot's suggestions, it is imposed on learners before they know the meaning and pronunciation of what they commit to memory.

Learning passages from Latin authors, as is often done, with a view to cultivate the taste, is not an efficient means of opening the mind to a perception of classical beauties. When these have been explained to a student, his committing them to memory cannot make him more conscious of their existence; whilst the frequent repetition required for learning any passage must blunt his feelings respecting the excellencies which it contains. Moreover, should it not have this effect, it is obvious that a few extracts, however well retained or delivered, are utterly inadequate to impart extensive and critical acquaintance with the merit of the great writers. Such a practice only serves to indulge plagiarism and a taste for Latin quotations.

These exercises of memory are far more interesting, and have a more useful tendency in the native than in a foreign language; for the students, entering then more fully into the spirit of the select pieces they learn, may, by frequent delivery, appropriate the moral sentiments and literary beauties which they contain. The recitation of them is also an efficient means of practising elocution, and may be introduced among friends as a social and intellectual recreation. But selections from foreign authors, with the exception of those intended for practising pronunciation, are, in general, unavailable as mnemonic acquisitions, and unprofitable as means of mental discipline.

It is a great error to believe that young people are well informed, because their memory has been much exercised. Let us keep in mind these words of Montaigne, "To know by heart is not knowing" "He who knows only by heart," says Condillac,

* *Du Perfectionnement Moral.*

"knows, as it were, nothing; and what he forgets he cannot find again."* "Whoever falls into that practice," says also Cobbett, "soon begins to esteem the powers of *memory* more than those of *reason;* and the former are despicable indeed when compared with the latter."† The practice of making young persons mere reciting machines has been reprobated by many; among others by Locke, J. J. Rousseau, and, above all, by the celebrated philanthropists, Pestalozzi and Fellenberg. The pupils of these two eminent men were exercised in a manner nearly similar to what we have endeavoured to explain. "That only," says Fellenberg, "which a man produces by combining the materials presented to him, or which he, to a certain degree, reproduces in his imagination until it becomes a part of his own train of thought, can be considered as a real acquisition, or can contribute satisfactorily to the development of his mind."‡

Memory acts undoubtedly an important part in the acquisition of languages: it is not therefore the use of this faculty which we condemn, but its abuse, and the inaction in which the other faculties are allowed to remain. The great end of instruction in youth ought to be that harmony of the intellectual powers which results from their equal cultivation, and which alone constitutes intellectual perfection.

SECT. IV.—MECHANICAL AND INTELLECTUAL MEMORY.

In repeating dialogues or selections from books, a child usually loses sight of the subject and only attends to the words. These, by force of repetition, are remembered in their order of succession, so that each word mechanically suggests that which is contiguous to it, and they are, at last, recited one after another, in an unvaried tone, and with the unconsciousness of old habit. Recollection of the words is assisted, not by the ideas which they convey, but by their local contiguity and by the place they occupy in the page which is, as it were, opened before the mind, when a learner is reciting his lesson. Should anything occur to interrupt him, he cannot resume, but must begin the whole again; and what proves that the reciter only connects sounds is, that each time the memory fails he mechanically repeats the word at which he stopped as a clue to the following. Lessons

* *Grammaire Disc. Prélim.* † *A Grammar of the English Language.*
‡ *Amer. Ann. of Education.*

thus irrationally learned are the bane of instruction. Besides the waste of a considerable portion of time devoted to learning and saying them, they are a cause of weariness and punishment, which cannot but create aversion for study, and blunt the moral feeling and the noble desire of knowledge.

The confusion of ideas which the foreign expressions present to a beginner, and the difficulty which he experiences in connecting them in his mind, must greatly impede his recollection of the phraseology. If a link is lost there is no association of ideas, no logical connection, by which the chain may be formed again. A series of expressions thus learned cannot be depended upon for any particular application, as they are not under the control of the individual.

Such lessons afford another proof of a fact which has already been stated, that the power of recollecting information is not always in proportion to the trouble taken in acquiring it; for no school-task is, perhaps, more troublesome than learning by heart lists of words or passages of books, and, yet, none is more easily forgotten. The reason is that this mnemonic exercise is a mere mechanical action of the tongue, which repeats words without any participation of the understanding.

This mechanical memory, or power of retaining words in given order, rests only on accidental association, and is of little use in after-life, although a means of success at school: it is often found associated with great deficiency in judgment. But intellectual memory,—that which is founded on the connection of ideas, on analogies and resemblances, on associations of cause and effect, of premisses and consequences, and which derives its efficiency from reasoning,—acts an important part in the formation of intellectual character, and bears on all the practical business of life. It is brought into activity in the study of a language by the analogical process of phrase-making, as also by narrating facts and describing things seen as well as heard or read of. These intellectual exercises furnish the mind with ideas and, consequently, with words; for the ideas cannot be learned independently of the words by which they are expressed; whereas words are often learned without ideas. We will, in the following Chapter, suggest further means of exercising this species of memory.

Intellectual memory can be applied to the learning of select pieces in a foreign language only when that language is fully understood, and its beauties of style appreciated; for the ideas

being then clearly apprehended and well engraved on the mind, their expressions will easily be recalled. But the practice of learning passages from books at an early period of the study does not, as already remarked, render literary beauties more obvious: nothing but the assiduous reading and analysing of a whole work can make us conversant with its style, and enable us to appreciate its merit; nor does this mnemonic exercise, any more than the practice of learning lists of words or dialogues, bring into action the higher sort of memory; it therefore has nothing to recommend it. Under the influence of this parroting process, every faculty of the child, save memory, remains dormant; every qualification of the teacher, save patience, remains useless:—the mode of action of each is merely mechanical, and consequently equally irksome to both.

We should consider that instruction has not for its object to afford young persons an opportunity of making momentary display of their recollective powers, but to leave in their minds profound impressions which may hereafter be recalled and applied as circumstances require.

Nor is exclusively repeating the ideas of others conducive to what alone is desirable, namely, the expression of one's own. On this point the art of the performer in language differs materially from that of the performer in music or dramatic recitation. Musical or theatrical men may well be satisfied with performing the compositions of others; but, if we wish to speak or write, we must perform our own. All the efforts of the master and the pupil should tend towards this.

Had children been taught not merely to repeat words, but to form sentences expressive of their own thoughts, and to convey in connected discourse the ideas which they have acquired from books, from conversation, or from experience, they would enjoy the fruit of their studies and application,—they would converse in the foreign language. Timidity and bashfulness are not often, as the deceived parent is too apt to believe, the cause of his child's silence when addressed in that language; they are only screens for his inability to speak: and how, indeed, can he be anything but timid and bashful when desired to do that in which he has never been instructed!

SECT. V.—OF DIALOGUES, COLLECTIONS OF IDIOMS, AND STANDARD WORKS, AS AUXILIARIES IN THE EXERCISE OF PHRASE-MAKING.

We must not be understood to reject dialogues and collections of idioms altogether. What we condemn are the utter neglect of the analogical principle, and the mechanical operation of repeating verbatim a set of phrases that may never be wanted in the form given them by the compiler, and which are commonly forgotten as soon as learned.

Collections of dialogues or of idiomatic and colloquial phrases may be resorted to as soon as, by previous acquaintance with the pronunciation of the foreign language and the conjugation of verbs, learners are prepared for promiscuous exercise in speaking. They present, in a condensed form, numerous expressions which, from the homeliness of the ideas conveyed, or the familiarity of the occurrences referred to, cannot, for the most part, be met with in either imaginative or didactic standard works. They will prove useful to those who learn by themselves, and will also enable a teacher readily to exercise his advanced pupils in the most familiar topics of conversation, or in the difficulties of grammatical and idiomatic structure. They may be employed, especially, by instructors who have not equal command of the foreign and the native tongues; for such persons would be incapable of going through the exercise of extemporaneous phraseology, which requires thorough knowledge of both languages. But whoever makes use of these compilations should bear in mind that, as the idioms or any other expressions which they contain assume in practice an infinite variety of modifications, they can be of no avail to a learner unless he understand them in all their diversities, whether written or spoken, and unless he possess the power of adapting them by analogy to the various situations of social intercourse. He ought then to prepare for their future application to the varied circumstances of conversation, by considering them only as models from which to make phraseological variations, either with his instructor or by himself, according as he is a beginner or a proficient.

In mentioning collections of phrases which may serve for practice in speaking, we have designedly omitted proverbs, although they have often been collected for the use of learners: because, not admitting of variations in their form, they cannot

enter into the phrase-making exercise. Proverbs and old sayings should not be confounded with idioms, which, in general, are susceptible of modification: they are pithy and, for the most part, trivial metaphors, which can be used only as quotations. It is, besides, injudicious to impose them as tasks on young people; for, appropriate as they may be in the mouths of uneducated philosophers, their familiarity would often shock, if introduced in polite society. As for those who prize this minor branch of literature, they can easily become skilful in the use of proverbs by simply committing them to memory; and if the sentiments which they convey, or their modes of expression, be not vulgar, they will form a useful acquisition; for though these memorials of national manners and feelings are no longer ornaments of conversation, they have not ceased to be treasures of thought. In Spain and in Italy they frequently possess a degree of pleasing poignancy and elegance, which perhaps render them less objectionable than in the other countries of Europe. It is obvious that we do not here allude to the proverbial expressions, maxims of wisdom, and aphorisms taken from the Scriptures or the classics: these, although unexceptionable among well-informed persons, are of too high an order to be introduced with strict propriety in familiar intercourse.

Any standard work in the foreign language may be used for exercising learners in phrase-making; it will, besides, offer more correct and elegant expressions for practice than the great majority of phrase-books. The instructor, when reading to accustom his pupils to the spoken language, occasionally stops and selects expressions with the forms of which he desires to familiarise them; or he takes an approved author with the exclusive purpose of exercising them in phrase-making. Having brought to their notice the peculiarity of structure which characterises the phrase he has selected, he makes them translate and re-translate it alternately, as we suggested in reference to Latin, when explaining the exercises in hearing. (See Book IX., Chap. I., Sect. III.) He then proposes a variety of English sentences, variations of the one just heard, which, being successively translated into the foreign language by the different members of the class, produce a series of analogous expressions which illustrate the particular form of the model-phrase. With learners as yet unskilled in this practice, he at first reduces the expression to its simplest form, and gradually introduces various changes in the persons, tenses, moods, and forms of the verbs; he substitutes or adds

various words which show its application to diverse circumstances of colloquial intercourse, being, at the same time, careful to preserve, through all the transformations, the idiomatic construction of the original expression. He multiplies the variations of each model-phrase in proportion to the usefulness of the idea which it conveys, or to the difficulty of its structure. In this way the phraseology of the foreign text is diversified indefinitely, and affords an exhaustless source of practice in speaking. A self-instructing learner may, as already suggested, derive considerable advantage from thus clothing his own ideas in the words of a standard author.

Any well written work may be used for this exercise; but the best calculated for this object is that which, by the popularity of its topics and the idiomatic turn of its style, furnishes the most useful materials for conversation.

For a class, the model-phrases may be written on a black board in view of the learners, who can thus the more easily follow the explanations of the professor, and construct similar phrases, at the same time that their memory is assisted by associating the orthography with the pronunciation. All the variations which are successively introduced may be tested by comparison with the model expression on the board; and their analogy being thus rendered more obvious, greater facility is afforded for construction. A professor, desirous of forwarding his pupils in grammatical analysis, can also use this means of exercising them in parsing the expressions submitted to their investigation. The black board will be found useful, whenever ocular demonstration may be required; for instruction is better secured when conveyed to the mind through the senses of seeing and hearing at the same time.

Ollendorff's "New Method," consisting of phrases formed on the principles of imitation and analogy, may, indeed, assist in introducing learners to the arts of speaking and writing the foreign language; but its phraseology demands considerable modification to make it applicable to general conversation. The tiresome repetition of the same phrases and the perpetual succession of homely questions and answers, diffuse throughout the exercises a monotony and triviality of expression, little calculated to interest, or to impart extensive command of the language. There is no teacher or adult learner who could not, with the phraseology of any popular standard work as a model, form more diversified, more useful, and more select phrases, than

those which fill the first volume of this cumbrous and expensive compilation.

Jacotot and his followers attempt to initiate learners into the speaking of a foreign language by asking them questions on the subject of the book they learn by rote; but the process of catechising young persons in various passages of one author, so as, in some sort, to compel them to use in their answers his very words, requires, on the part of a teacher, some preparation and a degree of attention and skill within the compass of very few. Besides, this exercise, for the greater part, elicits from learners only the mechanical repetition of words and phrases; it confines them to a very limited number of subjects; does not provide an extensive phraseology, nor even afford opportunity to practise the interrogative form; in short, this method, like phrase-books and dialogues, taxes the memory of learners without calling into action their own powers of analogy and invention. Tarver and Le Vert are, in this country, the only authors in whose works we have seen direct allusion to the phrase-making exercise; however, although their methods are more comprehensive than those of Jacotot, Ollendorff, Hamilton, Dufief, Porquet, and many others, set forth with ridiculous pretensions, they fail equally by deficiency in devising means of advancement in the higher departments of the study, and, especially, in the power of directly associating ideas with words—of thinking in a foreign language.

CHAPTER III.

NARRATION AND CONVERSATION.

SECT. I.—INTERCOURSE BETWEEN TEACHER AND PUPIL MOST FAVOURABLE TO THE PRACTICE OF SPEAKING.

WHEN the extempore formation of sentences has become of easy execution, and when the language, written or spoken, is perfectly understood, the learner may begin to converse in the foreign tongue: this he will easily do, if he be much in the society of his instructor, or of a friend who speaks that language.

The union of these two characters in one individual would greatly forward the learner's progress in conversation. It is therefore, advisable that a professor of languages should, in his intercourse with his pupils, preserve a degree of intimacy, gentleness, and indulgence, without detracting from his authority: he should be conversable rather than dictatorial, and should have, at all times, a pleasing manner, cheerful countenance, and familiar delivery. Unrelieved gravity, by intimidating his pupils, would repel their confidence and be an obstacle to freedom of communication.

Learners, on their part, should not hesitate to question their teacher on all doubtful points, or communicate with him on every thing which may interest them; they should consider him a friend as well as a master; they should repose in him the most implicit confidence, and, withal, show him that deference and respect which his high office claims.

From the unjust depreciation of the teacher's services in this country, he is sometimes denied that courtesy to which, as a gentleman, he is entitled. This observation more particularly applies to parents and adult learners in the opulent class of society. A learner, whatever be his rank, should be free from that unbecoming pride which too often prompts the wealthy man to look down upon any person whom he pays. What social intercourse can exist between a disdainful pupil

and a sensitive instructor? While the one displays the self-conceit of a narrow mind which renders his every look, his every action offensive, the other, especially if he be a man of education, suffering from wounded feelings, must be incapable of exerting his conversational powers to the greatest advantage of his pupil. Those who do not condescend to acknowledge their instructors as friends, and to talk more freely and familiarly with them than they would with mechanics, cannot expect to make much progress in the social talent of conversation in the foreign language; and those who wish to possess this valuable acquirement, should select for their teachers only such persons as they can associate with, and as are entitled to esteem and respect.

The professor, on his part, ought to encourage his pupils constantly to draw from memory and bring into use the stores they have laid up. When thus induced to apply to the expression of thought the materials of language which they possess, they make an effort that gives new energy to their memory and judgment. The best way to comprehend and remember what is learned, is, to be compelled to apply it.

An adult, we doubt not, will make the effort necessary to keep up a conversation; but a child, although talkative enough in his native idiom, and with his immediate friends, cannot have the same readiness in a strange language, particularly if he is of a timid disposition and stands in awe of his teacher. On the other hand, the instructor must guard against taking advantage of his superiority in point of language, to engross the conversation to the prejudice of his pupil, who, at an advanced stage of the study, requires to speak as well as to listen.

SECT. II.—NARRATION AS AN EXERCISE IN SPEAKING.

The exercise which appears best calculated for initiating a student into the direct and connected expression of thought in a foreign language, is that of narrating in it tales, anecdotes, or historical facts, previously studied with this intention. He should take his first narratives from works written in that language, read them several times mentally, and then deliver them while the words and phraseology are yet fresh in his recollection, with the ideas they convey and with which they are associated in his mind. In proportion as he advances in the language

fewer readings will suffice to fix both in his memory, until one reading is enough; he may gradually increase the interval between reading a passage and delivering it:—so regulating as to prevent verbal recollection of the whole original.

The narrative exercise goes one step beyond that of phrase-making, in which the learner formed unconnected sentences. In phrase-making the ideas were given to him; in narration he provides both the ideas and the expressions. In the one he translated into the foreign language the vernacular sentences given him by the professor; in the other he transfuses his own ideas directly into the foreign language.

As the learner acquires skill in this exercise he should, in preparing a narrative, attach himself to the ideas rather than to the manner in which they are conveyed, and to the connection of incidents rather than to the order in which the words succeed each other in the book. Once in possession of his subject, he should endeavour to bring into use the materials which he has previously collected by extensive reading, and should avail himself of the expressions of the foreign writer, when they come without effort,—when they, as it were, force themselves upon his recollection as the direct expression of his ideas; thus will he be led to speak his thoughts, that is, to think in the foreign language. However, it cannot be expected that this will be fully accomplished at once: the native expressions will naturally present themselves to the mind of the narrator as he endeavours to recollect the ideas and incidents; but, if he guard against translating the story when he reads it, he will find that they will not long intrude on his delivery.

In the beginning the learner will naturally condense the matter and confine himself to a few incidents; for the powers of the mind being engaged in considering the words and their syntactical arrangement, he will be unable to attend to a complicated story; but, as practice gives him greater command of expression, he gradually acquires the capability of attending to details, and consequently may undertake longer narratives. The minuteness of the particulars into which he enters will be the measure of his progress in this exercise. Whatever be his facility of recollection, he should, at any time, avoid servile imitation of the original text,—his object being *to relate*, not *to recite*. The less he depends on the words of the book, the nearer does his narration approach to extempore speaking. It will advance one step nearer to this point if he takes his

subject from a text in the vernacular, or any other idiom with which he is acquainted; but works written in the language which he studies are at all times preferable, as presenting models of style, and affording him the means of adding to his stock of words and phraseology in that language.

In a class the learners may all prepare the same narrative, and each in turn deliver some portion of it. Should they be sufficiently advanced in the language to enter upon this exercise, and yet feel diffident, they ought to select subjects for narration which are familiar to their instructor, thereby enabling him to aid their recollection: the initiatory books recommended for reading (see Book VIII. Chap. I.) would supply them. The professor, by skilfully catechising them respecting the characters and incidents of the story through the medium of the foreign language itself, would, in a colloquial way, elicit from them the whole matter. If the pupils would avoid monosyllabic answers, and employ, as much as possible, the words contained in their instructor's questions and observations, they would, by imitation and analogy, soon acquire facility of expression and confidence sufficient to speak more at length.

Some progress having been effected in the simple narrating exercise, the learners may mingle with the narrative observations of their own, conveyed in the foreign idiom. If judiciously assisted and encouraged in these manifestations of their reflective powers, they will be gradually led to comment at length on the subject and language of the books which they are reading. This will not only improve their power of expression, but, by affording them opportunity to hear the opinions of their instructor on the higher branches of literature, will cultivate their judgment and taste respecting the merit of foreign works. Conversing with well-informed persons on the subject of one's own reading leads to the removal of doubts and misconceptions, while it fixes in the mind the knowledge acquired and the phraseology of the author.

When students understand the spoken language, and no longer require to prepare for narration, the professor may desire them to narrate a story after they have heard him read or relate it in the foreign language, or he may, in an advanced class, make some of the learners read aloud; and when as much has been read as can be easily recollected, he should call on one of the hearers to narrate so far. These brief suggestions may suffice, as we have already adverted to this mode of securing the

attention of a class, and to the advantages arising from this alternation of exercises. The professor should have for this object a collection of interesting anecdotes or historical facts. The literature of every country in Europe abounds in compilations of this kind.

It is particularly at this stage of the learner's progress that the concurrent reading of standard works and hearing them read assume all their importance as means of collecting vocables and forms of speech: the practice of narrating and conversing in the foreign language must be facilitated by the fresh and repeated impressions left on the mind from each day's reading and hearing. The habit also of directly associating, by mental reading and mental audition, the ideas with the foreign words, contributes, with the frequency of narration and conversation, in securing the power of thinking in the foreign language.

SECT. III.—ADVANTAGES OF THE NARRATING EXERCISE.

The practice of narration is, in the foreign as well as in the native tongue, an excellent preparation for extemporaneous speaking, and not less useful for unfolding the mental powers than necessary for social purposes. It yields in importance to no other exercise: it calls into action memory as well as judgment, by fixing attention not only on the language, but on the connected facts of the narrative, portraits of characters, and descriptions of places. It cultivates the imaginative and inventive powers, by furnishing opportunities of substituting incidents necessary to the connection of the story for those which may have been forgotten. It fosters that self-confidence and presence of mind without which words and ideas are unavailing for the purpose of public speaking: he who possesses confidence and strength of nerve sufficient to speak for some time in a foreign language, especially before a large class, will certainly find no difficulty in doing the same in his own language.

As we have seen, reading to learners presents, in the beginning, many advantages over conversing with them, so at an advanced stage of their progress in speaking, relating stories is preferable to conversation: it affords the means of connecting ideas, and discoursing at length; whereas in conversation a learner usually confines himself to monosyllables and detached

phrases. An uninterrupted narration would, in equal times, afford more practice in speaking than conversation with the instructor. If a learner can speak for ten minutes together one day, he has overcome a difficulty and acquired a power that will enable him to speak with equal ease for fifteen minutes another day: a few such efforts will secure command of language in conversation.

Narrations present also this advantage: the instructor, not having to supply a subject of conversation, or to reply to incidental observations, may direct his attention exclusively to the correction of his pupils' errors. If he were, on the contrary, to converse with them, he would naturally attend more to the ideas than to their expressions or pronunciation, that he may be able to reply and sustain conversation. The learners, on their part, cannot join in serious debates until they have so completely mastered mental audition that they are able, while following their interlocutor, to think of the answer to his observations or arguments, and until also they have gained that degree of proficiency in pronunciation and phraseology which precludes the necessity of frequent corrections. Interruptions which turn attention from the subject to the language, not only annoy and discourage the speakers, but they render rational connected conversation impracticable. Goethe ascribes to similar interruptions his want of progress in French when he was in Strasbourg. "This," he says, "happened with me more than with others, as I always thought that I had to say something interesting, and, on the other hand, to hear something important, and did not wish to be always brought back merely to the expression."

Narrating is a preparation for acquiring the accomplishment of oral reading, because it teaches to speak; and good speaking is the first step to good reading. As an exercise in pronunciation and discipline of the voice, it is preferable to oral reading; for it associates the articulate words with their corresponding ideas —an indispensable requisite in speaking—whereas oral reading causes learners to practise the pronunciation, as we have already stated, inversely of what is required in the expression of thought. It often happens that, in reading a foreign language aloud, a learner is so intent on attaching the right sound to each syllable and letter that he neglects the sense: unable, consequently, to give the proper intonations, he acquires the habit of monotonous and disagreeable utterance. But, in relating, the ideas are first

attended to, the sounds follow as their immediate signs, and the voice assumes a natural tone. The exercise of oral reading in a foreign language directs the attention to pronunciation exclusively; that of narration embraces pronunciation, intonation, and the whole art of speaking: the first is merely mechanical, the second highly intellectual.

The story-telling exercise presents this additional advantage in a class,—it keeps alive the attention of all; especially if the subjects of the narratives are interesting and if the narrators pronounce correctly: while one practises speaking the rest of the class practise the more useful art of hearing. In large academical establishments, emulation will be excited among the advanced learners of a foreign language by means of weekly conferences held for the purpose of conversing in it. Each person, being obliged to relate an anecdote or story, will acquire command of the language, and, at the same time, contribute to make these conferences interesting.

Narrations, the length and difficulty of which may be increased proportionably to the proficiency of learners, are particularly well adapted to public instruction, in which it would be difficult, not to say impossible, to induce every member of a large class to join in conversation. Some would always be found, who, possessing either more confidence or more knowledge than the others, would engross the attention of the teacher, to the great prejudice of the rest, who could feel no interest in a conversation in which they have no share. Should they all wish to speak, the few words each would have time to exchange with the teacher would not permit them to make much progress. As to general conversation, young persons are not likely to take a part in it, when they are as yet but very imperfectly acquainted with the language. Hence, in the absence of suitable exercises for practising the arts of hearing and speaking, arises this singular anomaly,—the living languages, although learned for the sake of their usefulness as mediums of international communication, are, in public schools and colleges, altogether taught as if they were dead languages.

The suggestions we have made on the introduction of speaking exercises in public instruction present no difficulty in practice, when a class is well disciplined, or composed entirely of students anxious to improve, as is especially the case with adults. However, when want of time or the deficiency of the learners does not permit them to be much exercised in speaking, a remedy will

be found in the general adoption of the method prescribed for acquiring the power of understanding foreign languages when spoken; for, if this part of the study be carefully attended to in every country of the civilised world, those who master it possess, as already noticed, the means of international communion.

SECT. IV.—OF CONVERSING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.—EFFECT OF PRACTICE.

After a year's steady practice in the exercises of phrase-making, narration, and grammatical illustration, or even in much less time, if the learner is an adult and has been diligent, conversation will present no difficulty. The learner must, even at the risk of committing frequent mistakes, make a beginning as soon as he has gained familiarity with the pronunciation. He who defers beginning to speak a language until he knows it, commits a blunder like him who, desiring to go into the water, puts off doing so until he knows how to swim. He who has not the courage to speak badly will never speak well. Errors pave the way to perfection. To advance in the art of speaking, the learner should not only lay aside bashfulness which trembles at the idea of a mistake, but he must also divest himself of pride, which dreads being laughed at. These two feelings, by keeping the mind in constant awe, impede its free action. Even persons possessed of the greatest powers of language become, under their influence, incapable of delivering their sentiments with order and precision.

The mere art of speaking does not demand high development of the intellectual faculties, or much information; extensive practice, with ordinary powers of memory, imitation, and analogy, suffices; and these powers seldom fail in youth. This remark does not apply to oratory,—it is confined to the familiar expression of thought; and it is in this sense that Descartes said, "Very little judgment is wanted to know how to speak." * It is commonly observed that the ignorant speak more than the learned, and fools considerably more than sensible people. The talkativeness of servants and young children is proverbial.

He who has been more engaged in serious reflections and in enriching his mind with knowledge, than in frivolous talk, will sometimes labour under the disadvantage arising from want of

* *Discours de la Méthode.*

practice; although his mind is supplied with copious materials of discourse, he may hesitate in the choice of the ideas which he ought to convey, or of the words by which they can be most appropriately expressed; for he frequently discerns shades of difference which are not perceptible to the unthinking and the ignorant. "Blacksmiths and teamsters," says Emerson, "do not trip in their speech; it is a shower of bullets. It is Cambridge men who correct themselves and begin again at every half sentence." * The uneducated, intellectually circumstanced like a barbarian tribe, have occasion to speak only of familiar, sensible, and material objects; they possess none of those complex, relative, metaphysical, general ideas which result from extensive reading and close reflection; the perspicuity of their language proceeds from the shallowness of their thoughts. With the scanty provision of ideas and words gleaned without the aid of books, and with much practice in dealing out these few materials, they cannot feel embarrassment; they see only the surface of things; they know only the general import of terms; nothing hinders them from bringing out, on all occasions, their little stock in trade. Hence it is that those who know little often talk much. Practice gives readiness and facility—qualities within the reach of even the most illiterate; but copiousness and choice of language are the exclusive privilege of the well-informed.

It requires but few materials to begin to speak in a language. A young child commences with the first syllables he is able to lisp. When first he wishes for anything, he eagerly stretches his little hands towards it; the tender and provident mother, in giving it to him, seldom fails to pronounce its name; this name often repeated becomes, for the child, the sign of that object, and, under the influence of imitation, he instinctively substitutes it for his action, as a more certain and more expeditious means of making himself understood. In the course of time, as he adds to his stock of words, analogy guides him in the formation of sentences, which daily increase in length and in number. His application of these in making known his wants is not, at first, always very correct; he is apt to generalise terms and forms of expression, or to neglect the words which determine and specify the idea; but hearing the language from the lips of those who surround him, and afterwards reading well written works, easily remove these first errors; and the child, at last, can express himself with purity and even with elegance, although, as yet, he

* *Essay on Montaigne.*

knows not the reason, nor is acquainted with the rules of composition. If these had been imparted to him when he first attempted to convey his infantine ideas, it is most probable that he would not have advanced so rapidly in the art of speaking.

A child six or seven years old, taken to a foreign country and placed among children of that country, will, in less than twelve months, speak their language like themselves; at least, he will express himself in it with far greater fluency than the most learned scholar of the present day is able to do in Latin or Greek, after toiling for many years through grammars and dictionaries. He learns thus rapidly to speak from mere practice in hearing, without inquiring into the grammatical principles which govern the expressions he hears, or into the orthography of the words he has occasion to repeat.

Another remarkable proof of the importance of practice and of the power of imitation may be sometimes found in a gentleman and his servant, abroad; the servant, solely depending on his inquisitive, perceptive, and imitative powers, not unfrequently speaks the foreign language sooner than his master; for, in the servants' hall, or in the kitchen, being constantly in the company of other servants as talkative as himself, and free, as people of that class mostly are, from the dread of making blunders, he seizes every trifling circumstance to extend his vocabulary of familiar expressions, while his master may probably be hard at work, studying grammars and traveller's guides, lest he should commit himself when he occasionally goes into the society of the natives.

This fact is stated only to show the superiority of practice over theory for acquiring fluency of speech. We do not mean to give our unqualified approbation to the mode pursued by the servant; for, if he soon speaks, he commonly does it with a very incorrect pronunciation; because, in his thoughtless anxiety to talk, he uses the foreign words before he has heard them frequently enough to know how they should be pronounced. We provided against this evil in the foregoing Book. A learner, who has had much practice in hearing his instructor and in forming phraseological variations on the most useful verbs, can commit but few mistakes. Let him not be deterred by any feeling of timidity or supposed incapacity. Self-confidence is the basis of success in this as in every other pursuit. Practice will soon give him command of words, especially if, concurrently with it, he read popular works, and frequently make them

topics of conversation. He will form for himself a good conversational style, if he diligently compare the spoken with the written language, with a view to modify the one by the other; for he will then easily detect the errors and vulgarisms of the colloquial phraseology which he may hear, and thus know what words and phrases to adopt or reject.

From the moment that the learner uses the foreign language with any degree of expertness, his further improvement will be carried on by the adoption of a course similar to that which is followed in acquiring powers of oratory in the native tongue. That course he will know from the biography of eminent speakers, and by studying the national or foreign authors who have given precepts on the oratorical art. But, although fluency for familiar intercourse may be easily gained, it is not to be expected that, in ordinary circumstances, the learner will be able to acquire at home, complete knowledge of all the idioms and delicacies of the foreign language, or command of expression adequate for the elaborate discussion of serious subjects. Great powers of oratory are rare in the native tongue; and more rare still in a foreign idiom.

However, we will remark that acquaintance with human nature, a well-cultivated mind, and study of the great models, are the chief sources from which the talent of speaking derives the power of pleasing, convincing, and exciting emotions. To please, the speaker must join to a flexible vocal organ a correct pronunciation; his ideas must be lucid and consistent with reason, his style conformable to the subject, his tones, looks, and actions suitable to the sentiments which he expresses. If he wishes to bring conviction to the minds of his hearers, he must advance none but sound logical arguments, expressed with clearness and precision; he must, especially, evince thorough knowledge of the matter on which he discourses: the surest way to convince others is to speak from conviction. Finally, to move those whom he addresses, he must himself be capable of feeling every variety of emotion: "If you wish me to weep, weep first," says Horace.* "Eloquence," observes D'Agnesseau, "is not only a production of the mind; it is a work of the heart."† The noble enthusiasm of truth which kindles the soul of a virtuous character, is the parent of real eloquence: the words he utters have an authority which virtue alone can give. Hence the idea formed by the ancients of what constitutes an orator.

* *De Arte Poetica.* † *Discours sur la Décadence de l'Eloquence.*

"Vir bonus, dicendi peritus," (a good man skilled in the art of speech.)

SECT. V.—THE LEARNER'S CAPABILITY OF SPEAKING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPENDENT ON THE TEACHER.

The art of speaking a foreign language cannot be imparted, unless the teacher is himself able to speak it with fluency and correctness. The acquisition of this art being the result of practice, demands an interlocutor with whom the learners may practise, and who may, by his example, induce them to speak, as well as teach them how to speak. If he be not a fluent speaker himself, he will be unwilling to expose his deficiency, and his pupils will remain without practice; if he be not a correct speaker, he will impart to them all his errors and vulgarisms. Even should the instructor, following some of our directions, confine himself to reading to his pupils and making them narrate, yet the part he takes in these two exercises implies the power of fluent and correct speaking; for he cannot enable them to understand the language when spoken by the natives, if he does not himself pronounce like the natives, so as to accustom their ear to the familiar way of speaking that language; nor, when they narrate, can he correct their errors in pronunciation, choice of terms, grammatical concord, and idiomatical construction, if he be not himself able to express every idea readily and properly. Classical teachers, being rarely in possession of such a command of oral expression in Latin, have it not in their power to enable their pupils to speak that language.

The teacher should, by every means, draw his pupils into a dialogue, and elicit their colloquial powers; he should frequently question them on topics familiar to them, and for which he knows they are in possession of words; he should especially make the books which they are studying, subjects of conversation. Through his good management the riches which they have accumulated by reading and listening, may now, by conversation, be rendered productive, and enable them henceforward to enjoy the fruit of their exertion. Let them be communicative with him and trust to him for assistance and correction: it is his business to afford them every facility. He may, when they are completely masters of mental audition in the foreign language, furnish them with an inexhaustible topic, by teaching them, through that language, any other branch of knowledge, and,

above all, a second foreign language. If, in the latter case, the first language be substituted for the native tongue of the pupils in all the explanations of the professor, and in all the exercises necessary for acquiring the second, they will be afforded constant practice in hearing and speaking, which cannot fail to secure facility of expression.

If the teacher know how to encourage the efforts of his pupils, and seize every opportunity to call forth their powers of expression as they gradually extend their vocabulary, he will secure for them ease and expertness,—two most desirable qualities of speech, as they will be to them in after-life great inducements to join in conversation. People are inclined to indulge in what they can do easily; but feel reluctant to practise, especially in the presence of others, any art which demands effort on their part. A person who conveys his ideas without hesitation, although he may commit errors, will be listened to with less impatience, and even with more pleasure, than one who speaks in a hesitating manner, however classically correct his expressions may be.

When learners feel confidence and freedom in delivery, practice is all they require to arrive at superior skill in the art of conversation, and form those habits of language which secure the acquisition. It entirely depends on the teacher, by causing his pupils to practise phrase-making, narration, and conversation, as also by reading and speaking to them in the foreign language, to render its phraseology so familiar, and, as it were, instinctive, that by the force of habit they will retain the power of speaking long after the period of learning. The recollection of a language is, as before remarked, commensurate with the extent of practice, not with the degree of skill attained in it. A person, for instance, who, in a residence of two years in France, has acquired some fluency and accuracy in speaking French, would, on his return home, forget that language sooner than one who did not speak it quite so fluently or so accurately, but who, everything else being equal, had practised it double the time. On the same principle, the younger a child goes to reside abroad, the sooner he forgets the vernacular idiom; because the shorter is the period during which he has practised it. Whereas an adult, when abroad, preserves for a long time the power of expressing himself in his native tongue, even though he has no opportunity of hearing or speaking it. The more frequently learners are in the society of a foreigner, whether

he be a teacher or a friend, with whom they can converse in his own tongue, and the more intimate also their social intercourse with him, the sooner will they acquire, and the longer will they retain, the art of speaking that language.

SECT. VI.—OBSTACLES TO THE SPEAKING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

In this country great obstacles are thrown in the way of those who wish to converse in a foreign language. It is a notorious fact that the number of practical linguists is smaller here than among the continental nations, although foreign living languages are as generally studied as anywhere else. The insufficiency of the time devoted to them, and the wrong methods employed in learning them, although contributing, in great measure, to this result, are not the only causes of their being so little spoken.

This department of instruction is, especially among the wealthy, generally confided to English tutors and governesses, who, for the most part, not being themselves able to speak the foreign languages which they profess to teach, have it not in their power to impart this art to their pupils. The few who, under competent foreigners, have attained proficiency, are often deterred from availing themselves of their acquisition in society, by the dread of exciting laughter, to which the English are but too prone in detecting mistakes, whether committed by a foreigner speaking their language, or a countryman of their own speaking a foreign idiom. As to social intercourse with their teachers, or other strangers whose language they have learned, which would afford them opportunity to practise that language, they seldom enjoy such an advantage, owing to the national pride and spirit of aristocratic distinctions established by birth and fortune which generally exclude foreigners from society. "Nowhere in Europe, perhaps, does difference of fortune or station," we may add, of birth, of religion, of politics, and of country, "produce more unsocial and illiberal separations. The people meet, as if to fight the boundaries of their rank and fashion, and the less definite and perceptible is the line which divides them, the more punctilious is their pride. It is a great mistake to suppose that this low-minded folly is peculiar to people of rank: it is an English disease. But the higher we go in society, the wider the circle of the excluded becomes, consequently the greater the

range of human beings cast forth from the pale of sympathy .... The lofty walls, the iron spikes that surround our villas, and the notices everywhere affixed, that *trespassers will be prosecuted with the utmost rigour of the law*, are meet emblems of the social spirit that connects the different orders of society in England." *

In this land of political liberty, but social despotism, high talents are tolerated in society only when they court patronage at the sacrifice of personal dignity. As to teachers, they are seldom admitted to such a favour; for them especially, in this age of intellectual emancipation, is kept up the spirit of the good old times, when poets and schoolmasters were considered as part of the domestic establishments of the feudal lords. Whilst, on the continent, an eminent teacher sits at the table of the noblest princes, such a man in this country would, probably even to those who call themselves liberal, be an unwelcome guest at any entertainment to which the respectable inhabitants of a city are invited. This is inconsistent with the high estimation in which education is said to be held; it is a disgrace to a civilised community.

"The respect we pay to wealth," says Sir E. L. Bulwer Lytton, "absorbs the respect we should pay to genius. Literary men have not with us any fixed and settled position as men of letters. In the great game of honours none fall to their share. We may say truly, with a certain political economist, 'We pay best, first, those who destroy us,—*generals*; second, those who cheat us,—*politicians* and *quacks*; third, those who amuse us,—*singers* and *musicians*; and least of all, those who instruct us.'" †

Society, as it is constituted here, will long keep from the field of instruction foreigners of eminence and respectability. It is not probable that persons of capacity and education, capable of nobly fulfilling the duties of the profession, would exchange the beautiful climate of France or of Italy for the less genial atmosphere of England or Ireland; would expatriate themselves, and forfeit the consideration to which they are entitled, and which they enjoy at home, for the paltry remuneration and often cold reception given to them in these islands. What can a teacher expect, who builds his future prospects on knowledge, intellect, and morality, when we see birth alone respected, titles alone honoured, and wealth alone esteemed?

* *Woman's Rights.* † *England and the English.*

BOOK XI.

FOURTH BRANCH—WRITING.

"Je ne vous donne point d'autres définitions des vertus qu'un tableau des gens vertueux, ni d'autres règles pour bien écrire que les livres qui sont bien écrits."—J. J. ROUSSEAU.*

"Iter est longum per præcepta, breve et efficax per exempla."—SENECA.†

CHAPTER I.

DOUBLE TRANSLATION.

SECT. I.—IMITATION—BASIS OF COMPOSITION.

THE art of writing demands an extensive stock of ideas, great command of words, and acquaintance with their idiomatic and grammatical arrangements as well as with their orthography. Progress in it may be said to be commensurate with practice in the other three branches. Written composition will present little difficulty to those who have steadily pursued the course prescribed; who, by careful observation, have collected useful facts and right notions; who, by attentive and persevering study of the best writers, have their judgment developed, their memory enriched, and their taste cultivated.

The exercises which we will suggest as further preparation for composition, different from those resorted to in speaking, which require the active co-operation of the teacher, ought to be such as may be attended to without his assistance, that he may entirely devote his attention to what exclusively depends on him. He should make the early compositions of his pupils

* J. J. Rousseau, *Emile ou de l'Education.*

† "The way is long by precepts; it is short and effective by examples."—Seneca, *ad Lucilium*, Epist. 6.

means of giving them not only habits of correct spelling and grammatical accuracy, but also familiarity with the idioms and elegances of the language.

It is not by the common routine of grammatical exercises that these ends can be attained. They waste years in only showing learners how difficult it is to write—disheartening them by constantly finding fault with and erasing what has cost them much time and labour. Whereas, by judicious delay and a proper course of instruction, innumerable blunders are avoided which impatient teachers force on their pupils. Imitation, rather than rules, is the basis of improvement in the art of writing.

The best speakers and writers are those who, with highly developed imitative and imaginative powers, have had the good fortune to meet habitually with excellent models, and have applied all the resources of their minds, first to emulate, and then to surpass them. In accordance with this truth, the most effective exercise will be that which affords the readiest means of imitating good writers: their works are preferable to rules; for they give the words as they teach the form. "Every exercise," says the Abbé Gaultier, "which compels the mind to contemplate the great models, is the true and the only means of acquiring the power of imitating them, and perhaps of one day equalling them." *

We have already observed, that, by adhering to this principle, all great writers and orators have attained their acknowledged excellence. The imitative faculty fosters in them a merit analogous to that of their favourite authors. They afterwards improve on it, according to their peculiar genius. "It is impossible to bring your mind for any length of time under the influence of another mind without having your language and modes of thinking influenced by that mind. It is a law of nature that our minds insensibly imbibe a colouring from those with whom we associate, whether they are brought in contact by the living voice or on the written page." †

Demosthenes, to be well impressed with the style of a great writer, transcribed eight times the "Peloponnesian war" of Thucydides. Malherbe, the father of French poetry, had a predilection for Horace, which he called his breviary. When Clarendon was employed in writing his history, he was con-

* *Méthode pour exercer à la Composition française.*
† John Todd, *The Student's Manual.*

stantly studying Livy and Tacitus. The latter classic was also the favourite author of Montesquieu. Bourdaloue never passed a year without reading Cicero, St. Paul, and St. Chrysostom. Benj. Franklin, adopting Dr. Johnson's opinion, made the "Spectator" his model-book. To Fénélon's study of the "Odyssey" we owe "Télémaque," that master-piece of French literature.

The sentiments expressed on this subject by eminent writers will further show the propriety of making the study and imitation of standard works the basis of composition.

"It is indeed," says Dugald Stewart, "necessary for our information that we should peruse, occasionally, many books, which have no merit in point of expression: but I believe it to be extremely useful to all literary men to counteract the effect of this miscellaneous reading, by maintaining a constant and familiar acquaintance with a few of the most faultless models which the language affords." *

Voltaire observes, "There is more to be learned from Demosthenes, Cicero, Bossuet, than from all the treatises of rhetoric: they are the masters of the art." † We are informed by D'Alembert that this great writer always had within his reach Massillon's "Petit-Carême" and Racine's "Tragedies," the former to fix his taste in prose composition, and the latter in poetry.

The learned Arnauld recommends the daily study of Cicero, as the best means of forming a good style. J. J. Rousseau made Plutarch the object of his meditations: "This is the book," he says, "which pleases and benefits me most; it was the first reading of my childhood, it will be the last of my old age." ‡ "Plutarch is the man of my choice!" also exclaims Montaigne. §

Boileau declares himself the imitator of Horace. He used to say, "I am but a beggar clad with the spoils of Horace." Galileo attributes the perspicuity and grace of his style to the continual study of Ariosto. Dante acknowledges Virgil for his model. "Thou art my master and my author," he exclaims in his sublime poem; "it is from thee alone I took that beautiful style which has done me honour." ‖

* *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.*

† *Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations.* ‡ *Confessions. Premenade* 4.

§ *Essais.* Liv. II. Ch. x.

‖ "Tu se' lo mio maestro e lo mio autore;
Tu se' solo colui da cui io tolsi
Lo bello stile che mi ha fatto onore."—*Divina Commedia.*

Robert Burns says in one of his letters, "It is an excellent method for improvement, and what, I believe, every poet does, to place some favourite classic author in his own walks of study and composition before him as a model." * Byron corroborates this opinion: he had early read and studied Pope. In the maturity of his genius, he recollected what he owed him, and, in one of his letters, mentions him in these terms, "The delight of my boyhood, the study of my manhood, perhaps, if allowed to me to attain it, he may be the consolation of my old age." †

There have been, these two centuries, few eminent men in the sciences or belles-lettres, the filiation of whose works cannot be traced to those of a predecessor. Gibbon and Robertson descend from Tacitus; Boileau and Pope from Horace; Racine from Virgil; Molière from Plautus on one side, from Terence on the other; Lafontaine, on one side, from Ariosto and Boccaccio, on the other, from Phædrus, who descends from Æsop; Thos. Moore from Anacreon; Lagrange and Laplace from Euler and Newton; Condillac descends from Locke, Locke from Bacon, Bacon from Aristotle.

Jacotot's method is principally founded on this truth: he pretends to make his pupils derive every information from one book. They learn and repeat incessantly that model-work, decompose and recompose it, form infinite variations on the same theme, endeavour, in fact, in every possible way, to imitate their model; and thus acquire some readiness in expressing ideas. We do not, however, agree with this educationist as regards the propriety of confining students to the exclusive reading of one work. To learn by rote any one volume, whether it be "Télémaque," the one selected, or any other, cannot surely impart the ability to read all French works, especially those which, differing from it in style and subject-matter, necessarily contain words and idioms not to be found in that volume; it cannot enable them to understand the diversified and rapid expression of social intercourse; it cannot give them the familiar and idiomatic phraseology of conversation; and, besides these defects, this method makes them practise a barbarous pronunciation. Under the influence of this exclusive study, young people lose their individuality, and become servile imitators in thought and style of their model author. Such are the effects of a system which, based on good principles, errs only by abuse of their application.

* *Letter to Mr. P. Hill.* † Moore's *Life of Byron.*

The process by which the language of foreign works is imitated must be such that the difficulty of the exercise will be proportioned to the proficiency of the learner. We cannot repeat too often that no exercise of any kind, physical or intellectual, should be so easy as to dispense with exertion of the faculty engaged; for the careless ease of the performance does away with all chance of improvement; nor should it, on the other hand, be so difficult as to present insurmountable obstacles, which waste time, occasion discouragement, and early excite disinclination for exertion.

Merely copying, like learning by rote, is not imitating an author; it is a servile mechanical operation which, at best, exercises only the memory. If Demosthenes had contented himself with repeatedly transcribing the models of his time, his name would not have come down to us. To be able to compose we must bring imagination and judgment in aid of imitation. Attempting to write in imitation of a model-composition, and after simple perusal of it, would be the other extreme, and impracticable at an early period of learning: it can be had recourse to only by a person already advanced in the foreign language, with a view to perfect his style, as is often practised in the native tongue. In the study of the fine arts it would be equally injudicious to begin by copying the outlines of a model through transparent paper, or by drawing at once from the human figure.

There is no exercise better calculated for avoiding these two extremes in the process of imitation, than the writing of *double translation*, as recommended by Cicero, Pliny the younger, Quintilian, and nearly all those who, to the present day, have suggested means for acquiring the art of composition.

SECT. II.—TRANSLATION FROM A FOREIGN INTO THE NATIVE TONGUE.

Double translation consists in translating from a foreign author into the national tongue, and from this version back into the original language. By this means the just medium before alluded to may easily be attained, as will shortly be seen; and other advantages will result, which we will point out in explaining more particularly the nature of this exercise.

In the first operation, the student must keep in mind the two great principles of translation: 1. fidelity in transfusing the original ideas; 2. conformity to the genius and idiom of the language into which the translation is made.

Strict adherence to the first point ensures perfect comprehension of the foreign author, and thus promotes improvement in the foreign language. It supplies the deficiencies necessarily resulting from the cursory and careless manner in which a reader usually passes over words when the attention is exclusively engaged in apprehending the general sense. A translator weighs the original expressions with more exactness, and analyses the ideas more minutely. So, at an early period, this first translation helps learners to understand thoroughly the foreign idiom.

In attending to the second point, the translator acquires and practises the art of composition in the national language. The mental exercise of selecting the words which will convey the thoughts of the foreign author most accurately is perhaps the fittest that could be devised for acquiring precision in the native tongue. The habit also of expressing new ideas will tend to enlarge his vocabulary and make him conversant with syntactical intricacies. "It is often by translating," says Degérando, "that young people learn best all the laws of the art of writing."* "The exercise of translation," says also Saint-Marc-Girardin, "is the best means of teaching man the art which he thinks he acquires naturally, and yet has need to learn, the art of expressing clearly his thoughts."† He cannot, indeed, feel embarrassed in expressing his own ideas, who has properly expressed those of Xenophon, Cicero, or Bossuet.

Consistently with this truth, we find that most writers of any repute have commenced their literary career by translation. Walter Scott's first publication was a translation of Goethe's early drama, "Götz von Berlichingen." Guizot, when yet very young, translated Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Dugald Stewart, the biographer of Adam Smith, informs us that, with a view to improve his style, this celebrated Economist employed himself in frequent translations, particularly from the French; a practice which he recommends to all who cultivate the art of composition.‡ Among the eminent

* *Des Signes et de l'Art de Penser, &c.* Part II. Sec. 1.

† *De l'Instruction Intermédiaire dans le Midi de l'Allemagne.*

‡ *Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith.*

writers who have prepared for original composition by translation may also be mentioned the eloquent J. J. Rousseau. "When I was so unfortunate," he says, "as to wish to address the public, I felt I wanted to learn how to write, and I dared to try myself on Tacitus. I did not seek to render the phrases of Tacitus, but his style; nor to say what he said in Latin, but what he might have said in French."* It was by translating the Greek orators that Cicero, as we are informed by himself, improved his powers of composition.†

Lord Brougham, who is an authority of great weight in such matters, observes, "It is necessary to acquire correct habits of composition in our own language, first, by studying the best writers, and, next, by translating copiously into it from the Greek. This is far the best exercise that I am acquainted with for at once attaining an English diction."‡ He informs us that this was also the opinion of Robertson, the historian, who practised translation in preference to original composition, with a view to improve his style; and he adds, "I may mention that both he and his son, the judge, prescribed this exercise to me and, among others, made me translate all the "History of Florus."§ "By translation," says Goldsmith, "the learner will become more intimate with the beauties of the writing and the idioms of the language from which he translates; at the same time, it will form his style, and, by exercising his talent of expression, make him a more perfect master of his mother-tongue."‖ "If you wish to be one day translated," says also D'Alembert, "begin yourself by translating. The work of translation would be a rich harvest of principles and ideas, an excellent school in the art of writing. This was the opinion of Desprćaux (Boileau). Why is it not followed by our young literary men, the greater part of whom hasten to take the pen without having learned to hold it, and to be authors before they have thought?"¶

Translation should also be cultivated for its own sake. Any one nation is of itself insufficient for its own full development: the philosophy and history, the sciences and arts, the imaginative and poetical creations of those who live in other climes, or have lived in other ages, are required not only to complete its civilisation, but also to counteract that intense national prejudice

* *Traduction du Premier Livre de Tacite.* † *De Orat.* Lib. I. Sec. 34.
‡ *Inaugural Discourse of the University of Glasgow*, 1825.
§ *Lives of Literary and Scientific Men.* ‖ *Essay on the Cultivation of Taste.*
¶ *Eloge de Mr. de Sacy.*

which, under the name of patriotism or national pride, has been fostered as praiseworthy, and has kept up offensive feelings among men of different countries. The literature of translations would be an effectual means of enlarging the sympathies of nations, and of freeing them from the bigotry of narrow literary creeds; it would, by mutual exchange of improvements and discoveries, unite them in common views of moral and intellectual progress.

The revival of letters in modern Europe was, in great measure, the offspring of translation. This art is destined to render further services to humanity; its importance cannot fail to increase, as the different nations of the earth advance in their respective walks of civilisation. Already its utility is universally felt: but the demand for translation is not adequately responded to by those who are able to undertake it; because this department of composition being generally and most erroneously believed to require little ability and information, superior minds are unwilling to enter upon a pursuit which does not obtain credit commensurate with its difficulty and merit. More ambitious to be themselves one day translated, than to translate others, they abandon this important and difficult branch of literature to unskilful hands.

The Germans, however, seem free from this reproach: the flexibility and copiousness of their language, which readily assimilates itself to all other idioms, has raised the art of translating in their estimation. Such men as Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, Voss, Schlegel, Tieck, have not disdained its honours, and have shed lustre on this department of literature. Nor has its value escaped the French Academy: this society, always foremost in advancing the great interests of humanity and encouraging every species of literary merit, awards yearly prizes for the best translations.

To translate demands mental qualities and acquisitions of the first order. It is extremely difficult for a painter to transfer the beauties of an original to a copy, although he uses the same colours, and aims solely at a faithful imitation of his model: the translator's task must be vastly more difficult; for he uses very different materials from those of his model, and, yet, he is expected, by touches of his own, to produce a perfect resemblance. Not only must he know thoroughly the two idioms, but, to identify himself with the author of whom he is the interpreter, and to transfuse the spirit and the essence of his com-

position into another language, he must enter with warmth and vigour of feeling into all his sentiments and reasonings. None but a man of genius can translate adequately the productions of a man of genius. Voltaire somewhere observes, after a good tragedy, nothing is more difficult to write than a good translation. "Of all books," says de Lamartine, "the most difficult to be written is, in my opinion, a translation."*

A faithful and elegant translator ought to hold a high station in the republic of letters; his office implies public spirit the most void of ostentation; kind regard for his fellow-men, evinced by placing eminent productions within their reach; love of native country, shown by enriching its literature; just regard for the excellences of other countries, manifested by giving publicity to foreign works; care, judgment, flexibility of talent, and powers of language, not required for original writing, and, withal, a degree of humility in scarcely aspiring to the name of an author.

Translation ought to be encouraged among our youth: a taste fostered for this pursuit may lead many to confer, at a future period, great benefits on their country. The practice of writing translation from the classics should, in grammar schools and colleges, enter more largely than it does into the curriculum of exercises. In many of them the national language holds but secondary rank as a distinct branch of instruction; but, wherever the boys are much exercised in free translation from Latin and Greek, it compensates for this apparent neglect of their own language. Modern tongues may render the same service to those who do not study the ancient. Persons, in particular, who are destined to fill public offices, or social positions which demand powers of oratory or composition, should, when they are once acquainted with a foreign language, persevere in translating it into their own under the direction of a literary guide.

SECT. III.—TRANSLATION AND ORIGINAL ESSAYS IN THE ATIVE TONGUE COMPARED.

The essays which young people are usually required to write in their own language, not unfrequently on very abstract subjects, are to them, from the inadequacy of their information, a very difficult and painful task. Translating from a foreign language,

* *Voyage en Orient.*

on the contrary, offers an inexhaustible source of progressive and interesting composition: a learner, thereby, not only has a subject before him, but he practises writing under favourable circumstances; for his attention can be entirely directed to the choice of words and to their arrangement. The work of translation possesses also the great advantage that it does not, like original composition, suffer from frequent interruptions,—it may be left off and resumed as often as required; the length of the task apportioned to each learner can be made to suit his particular degree of proficiency, or power of attention, as well as the time allotted to him for study in the school or the family.

When original writing is attempted before the mind has reached maturity, the learner is encouraged in habits of diffuse declamation: he is led to introduce in composition none but common-place ideas, and to conceal poverty of thought under pomp of phraseology; whereas, in translating from a standard work, the subject to be treated is always valuable, and the learner habituates himself to express only what is just and sound. In writing original essays his mind is engaged on things which he already knows; in translating from a good work he is led to reflect on subjects which probably he had not previously considered, and thus his sphere of thought is enlarged. Even his intellectual character will be improved, if he aim at a faithful and elaborate translation; for ideas cannot be completely and adequately transferred from one language to another, unless the translator call forth all his reflective powers, enter into the spirit of his author, rise, as it were, to a level with him, and follow the same train of thought.

The exercise of translation is also well calculated to extend the power of expression in the native tongue, because it is more difficult to render well the ideas of others than one's own. In original composition, people employ only such words and phrases as they already know, and sometimes even modify the ideas that originally started in the mind, to suit them to their scanty stock of language; but translation not only exercises the writer as well as original composition in applying the words he already knows, it also compels him to search for others with which he is unacquainted; it binds him to the expressing of particular ideas, and thus stimulates him to grapple with the difficulties of his own idiom. Original composition teaches to avoid difficulties; translation to overcome them.

By directing his attention to the details attendant upon the

formation of a good style, the translator investigates the genius of both languages: he perceives that the words and their order do not always correspond in the foreign and the native idiom; he minutely analyses the foreign expressions, seeks words equivalent to those of his author, tries in various ways to render his identical thoughts; he considers the synonymous words, the proper and figurative terms, the grammatical and idiomatical forms which may best render in his own language the ideas and sentiments of the foreign writer. His discriminative powers are exercised in ascertaining when to follow or to abandon the literal translation, and when to modify or to supply an image unsuitable to his native tongue. The more the two idioms differ in construction, the nearer the translation approaches to original composition; and the increased effort required for accomplishing it augments the merit of the triumph. In short, by this exercise, the student distinguishes the most delicate shades of ideas, acquires perspicuity of language, extends his power of speech, and forms those mental habits of clearness, order, and precision, which are the fruit of good classical education.

It is not then merely as a means of acquiring a foreign language that translation from it should be practised; its most important office consists in exercising the intellectual faculties, and extending indefinitely the power of expression in the native idiom: it should, therefore, be frequently performed, whether the double translation be completed or not, by translating back into the original text. This suggestion, already made in reference to oral translation, applies with greater force to the written. The rapidity with which oral or mental translation is usually performed does not permit the learner to polish his style: the improvement in the native tongue which he may expect from it chiefly consists in extending his vocabulary and gaining readiness of expression; but written translation, allowing more time for reflection, affords every possible means of attending to correctness, perspicuity, and harmony of style. His mode of expression can always be minutely compared with that of the original; on this comparison depends his improvement in native composition. The better the translator conceives the thought of his author, and perceives the perspicuity, force, and grace of his style, the more conscious is he of his own deficiencies, and, consequently, the greater his chance of becoming a good writer himself.

SECT. IV.—DIRECTIONS FOR TRANSLATING INTO THE NATIVE TONGUE.

A learner should, in translating, be faithful to the original text and yet conform to the genius of his own idiom; he should be careful neither to add to nor take from the ideas of the original; for his business is rather to copy than to compose. Nothing but the incapacity of the language to furnish a perfect equivalent can justify the use of an expression more or less forcible or comprehensive, more or less dignified or familiar, than the original. More liberty, however, may be taken with imaginative than with didactic works. Figures of thoughts, which are independent of language and mark the character of the foreign writer, must be preserved; but figures of words, which often cannot be transferred into another language, may be represented by other figures equivalent to them, or even by their proper terms. Proverbs and aphorisms must be rendered by corresponding ones: the moral truths which they convey have their familiar expression among all nations, and are, in different languages, presented under different images, borrowed mostly from physical facts. But, in thus availing himself of corresponding forms of expression, he must beware of attributing to one place or time the peculiarities of another, as did Echard, in his translation of Terence, who, among many other incongruities, makes a character in one of the plays of this writer say, "He looks as grave as an alderman," a comparison, be it said without disrespect to aldermanic gravity, rather ludicrous in the mouth of a Roman. Dryden has fallen into a similar absurdity in the following line, translated from Ovid, "And he not wholly French or wholly Dutch."

The errors most frequent among translators and against which learners should guard very carefully, as being the most easily fallen into, are those which result from diversities of meaning attached to words in all languages. The blunder committed by De Laplace, who translated "*Love's last Shift*," the title of one of Cibber's plays, by "*La dernière chemise de l'amour*," is a sample of the absurdities to which imperfect knowledge of a foreign language may lead. D'Israeli mentions, among other blunders of this kind, that an English translator turned "*Dieu défend l'adultère*" (God forbids adultery) into "*God defends adultery.*"

A Frenchman, who prided himself on giving a verbal translation of Shakspeare's Henry IV., rendered the last words of the line, "So dull, so dead in look, so *woe-begone*," by "*Ainsi, douleur, ca-t'en.*" Another Frenchman inserted Miss Edgeworth's "*Essay on Irish Bulls*" in a catalogue of works on "Natural History," mistaking it for a treatise on horned cattle.*

There is another species of false interpretation which, although now rendered scarce by the art of printing, requires to be noticed, as a caution against the inaccurate text, or translation, of ancient authors. Before the invention of printing, commentators and translators were often thrown into great perplexities, owing to the ignorance of copyists who transcribed incorrectly. We may mention, as an instance of such mistakes, the verse of St. Matthew in the vulgate, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Although the strangeness of this simile has been accounted for in some other way, it may nevertheless be conceived that the translator confounded *kamelos* (camel) with *kamilos* (cable); the latter word, presenting a consistent figure, seems to have been that of the original Greek text.

Conciseness being one of the first requisites of style, the learner must avoid translating single words by periphrases: these are excusable only when the poverty of the language which he uses renders them necessary. Before he resorts to them, he should be certain that the difficulty does not arise from his own deficiency. Although he might be justified in availing himself of the foreign terms in the absence of corresponding native words, or when the phrases by which they may be interpreted are rather complicated, nevertheless, an attempt at translating them, however circuitously, is always preferable, as being to him a trial of skill in translation. The license of adopting foreign words is particularly the privilege of eminent writers, who are thus afforded a means of enriching their national language.

Literal or verbatim translation renders the words of a foreign author, and free or idiomatic translation, his ideas: the former suits a beginner; the latter, a proficient. Free translation presents great scope for reflection and invention; it permits a learner to render an idiom or a figure by its corresponding one; and to substitute new graces of style for those which are untranslatable; whereas verbatim translation,

* *Curiosities of Literature. Literary Blunders.*

which confines him to the consideration of words, often presents but confused ideas and a mass of barbarisms. Idiomatic translation, whether oral or written, is, more than a literal one, an evidence that the translator feels the force of the original. It should be remembered that the very object of so translating is to preserve the spirit of an author, where it would be lost or weakened by a literal version; but, where such a version would be faithful to the spirit, there, of course, it should be adopted. In translating from the ancient classics, especially, the advanced learner should be ambitious of transfusing their spirit into the native language, not of moulding its outward forms into blind conformity with those of Latin and Greek.

Free translation from a foreign author is advisable also with a view to foreign composition. By being accustomed to translate idiomatically, a learner, when expressing his own thoughts in a foreign language, is enabled to render his vernacular idiom into the appropriate foreign phraseology. An English person, having been always accustomed, for instance, to translate the French *on dit*, by the passive, *it is said*, remembers, in virtue of the association thus formed in his mind, what expression in French is equivalent to this English phrase; whereas, if he has been taught to render *on dit* literally by *they say*, he has no occasion to use the English passive form in his translation from French; and when, in his own French compositions, he wishes to render the passive, he is at a loss how to do it, and not unfrequently, from the erroneous notion that the verbal form in one language must be the same in another, renders it by the French passive voice; a fault which all who have had any experience in boys' compositions must have frequently noticed. As a general rule, the translator should guard against introducing in one language the forms of expression which mark the genius of the other, although the literal translation might not present any violation of grammar. But, however desirable elegances of style may be in a translation, whenever they are irreconcilable with the sense of the original, they should be sacrificed; correctness in the native expression is all that can be expected.

It is often suggested, as a general direction, that the foreign work should be rendered in that style which, it may be presumed, its author would have employed, had he written in the language into which the translation is made. This suggestion, although consistent with reason, must be received with some

caution ; for, if strictly followed, it may sometimes lead to mere imitation rather than to faithful interpretation of the original ; besides, it may restrain the flexibility of the language and its adaptation to diversified expression of thought. This rule may suit a translation written for the public ; but it would not accomplish the object of those who, by this exercise, aim at mental culture and at learning both languages. The business of a student who translates is not to bring the author down to his own level ; but, on the contrary, to elevate himself to the position of the author, and to surround himself in imagination with all the influences which formed his creative mind.

The art of translation can be attained only after great practice, and especially after long and attentive study of the national standard works ; for, to convey in one language the identical ideas expressed in another, the facts in all their reality, the descriptions in all their colouring, the sentiments in all their shades, and the arguments in all their force, requires an extensive knowledge of the two idioms, and particularly of the native. To accomplish all this in a style perfectly correct and analogous to that of the original demands powers of composition, not equal, but superior to those of the foreign writer.

In the correction of the first version the instructor must see that his pupils have conveyed the identical meaning of their author ; he must be most particular in commenting upon their errors and suggesting suitable forms of expression ; for it is of the utmost importance that they should write their own language with accuracy and elegance. We have already observed that foreign teachers are not generally the most competent critics in English composition : they are apt to tolerate, nay, encourage the idiomatical forms of their own language in the native compositions of their pupils, who, afterwards, find it difficult to avoid errors which practice has confirmed into habit.

The correction of the translation—the same being written by all the members of the class—has, in public instruction, great advantage over that of original essays : it can be effected simultaneously for all the members of a large class ; and it occupies comparatively little time. Each learner having his exercise-book open before him, and pencil in hand, is, in turn, called upon to read a portion of the composition on which the professor comments, the others, at the same time, marking such mistakes as they have made in common with him. The examination of an exercise of twenty lines, read aloud two or three times over in

portions of four or five lines, by a dozen learners, would amply suffice to elicit all the errors of translation or style which may have been committed by fifty or more students in an advanced class. Essays, on the contrary, require each to be read through and examined separately; their correction, consequently, engaging the attention of only one learner at a time would leave the others idle, and, from the time consumed, would be impracticable in a class composed of even fifteen or twenty persons only. Translation, by requiring all the learners to express the same ideas, would bring their powers of composition to a closer, and hence a more interesting contest; much useful information would also be elicited by a critical examination of their different modes of expressing the same thoughts.

As a means of improvement in vernacular composition in the absence of an instructor, the first version may be compared with a standard translation of the foreign work, and corrected accordingly. The use of such a translation has already been, and will again be, recommended: it may, if duly appreciated, render the greatest services in linguistical studies. Any person, even one unacquainted with the foreign idiom, may assist a child in native composition; by comparing his translation, viewed as an original essay, with the printed translation, and entering with him into such disquisitions on grammar or style as this comparison may suggest.

With proper attention, the student will soon overcome all the hindrances to the attainment of the first object in translation, namely, *conceiving clearly the ideas of the author;* because there must be a time when comprehension of the foreign written language is perfect; but the second object, *expressing these ideas faithfully and in appropriate idiomatic language*, presents a boundless field of exertion: for the art of composition may always be improved. In language, as in the fine arts, the power of understanding, appreciating, and enjoying finished composition has its limits, whilst skill in execution admits of no limits in its improvement. Perfection, although it may be unattainable, should always be aimed at.

But, to possess completely the art of writing the national language, the student must not confine himself exclusively to translation, which would be apt to keep his mind in a state of vassalage. Original composition, to which it is a preparatory step, must be occasionally attempted; and if he have duly studied his national classics, it will present little difficulty; for

any person able to translate well cannot fail to be himself a good writer, should he possess ideas worth communicating to the public.

SECT. V.—RE-TRANSLATION INTO THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

This second translation,—the exercise intended to teach composition in the foreign language,—may be written, for greater convenience, in the same copy-book, opposite to the first, the alternate pages having been left blank for this purpose. As it presents greater difficulties than translating into the vernacular language, it demands all the attention of which the learner is capable. In translating into a foreign language, great caution is, at first, required to avoid the many errors incident to ignorance. It is not sufficient to know the rules of grammatical concord and syntax, the learner must consider every word of a sentence before he writes it; he must ascertain the gender, number, and case of each substantive, adjective, and pronoun; the mood, tense, and person of each verb he has occasion to use; the governing and the governed term; the place of each word; finally, he must refer to the grammar and dictionary, to clear up the least doubt. This careful way of proceeding, persevered in for some time, will create habits of attention and accuracy, which will render his further progress rapid and certain. It will be well if, in the commencement, young people write this second translation under the eye of a person who will make them consider every word before writing it.

The second translation possesses this peculiar advantage, that it can be introduced at the earliest as well as at the most advanced stage of the study; for its difficulty may be diminished or increased at will. In the commencement, the first version into the native tongue is made as literal as this language permits, and the translation back into the foreign idiom is written shortly after the other, whilst the expressions of the model-book are still vivid on the memory. The few words which the learner may forget can easily be ascertained from the dictionary, or even from the original text, if he is able to resist the temptation of reading more words than he strictly requires. The attentive perusal of that text just before effecting the retranslation may, in the beginning, further facilitate this operation.

As the learner advances, he should gradually depend more on his knowledge of the language, and less on recollection of the

original. He should, therefore, render the first translation more freely into his own language, without, however, losing sight of the precise idea of the original, and should increase proportionably to his proficiency the interval between the two translations. By these means, as he progresses, memory and reflection have greater scope for exercise.

The importance of increasing the difficulty, according to the degree of proficiency of the student, has been noticed before. An exact recollection of the original would render the second translation too easy, and would not be much more beneficial than the mere exercise of copying; complete obliteration of it from the mind would be equally bad, as it would make the task of re-translation too difficult. If the two extremes be carefully avoided, the double translation will become, by proper exercise of the imitative and retentive faculties, a certain and easy method of arriving at a practical knowledge of the art of writing; for it is by decomposing that we learn to compose. Thus it is a successful application of the two methods to which we have before adverted: the first translation is an analytical, and the second a synthetical process.

The double translation of a foreign standard author is, as a means of storing the mind with the materials of discourse, far more efficient than the learning of vocabularies or dialogues; because the retentive and the recollective powers of the memory are successively called into action by the two versions; and are, besides, exercised on words, the import of which is determined by the context, as well as on a phraseology which can always be depended upon as a model. It has this other peculiar advantage, that the more idiomatic the foreign expression is, the more it engages the learner's attention in searching for its equivalent in the native tongue; and, consequently, the greater is his chance of recollecting it for his second version and for ever after. As a means of forming his style in the foreign language, the double translation is preferable to simple reading; because it keeps the model for a longer time before the mind, and thereby impresses it more permanently on the memory. Let us add that the double opportunity which it affords of comparing the construction of the two languages, exhibits in a striking manner the minutest shades of difference which characterise their genius; and, consequently, points out the principles peculiar to each, or common to both, that is to say, practically teaches particular and general grammar.

Advanced learners who have not time to write the first version, or have no occasion for practising native composition, may translate back into the foreign language a standard translation of one of its classic authors. But, whether they render the foreign tongue into the native, or *vice versâ*, a careful comparison of their performance with a standard interpretation or the original text, according as they translate into the one or the other language, would aid them in improving their power of composition in either.

If translation from a foreign author improves, as we have seen, the talent of composition in the native tongue, the inverse operation acts an equally useful part; it familiarises learners with all the intricacies of the national grammar, and thus completes the knowledge of the national language. To render exactly the native words into another language, not only must their meaning in each particular instance be ascertained, but also the relation which they bear to the other words, or the class to which each belongs; for many words, from the poverty of language, bearing various acceptations, being used in different relations, and often belonging to several distinct classes, are translated differently in different circumstances. As a general rule, a word is interpreted by as many words in another language, as it admits of different significations.

Thus an English person, translating his own language into French, is led, in the course of practice, to discriminate, for example, between *passion* a generic, and *passion* a specific term, which words are rendered into French, the first by *passion*, and the second by *colère;* between *to perceive* (to see) and *to perceive* (to be conscious), in French, *apercevoir* and *s'apercevoir;* between *to know*, denoting simple perception, and *to know*, used with reference to the knowledge acquired by the intellectual powers, in French, *connaître* and *savoir*, &c. He learns when *better* is used as a verb *(améliorer)*, an adjective *(meilleur)*, or an adverb *(mieux);* when *that* is a conjunction *(que)*, a determinative *(ce, cette)*, a demonstrative pronoun *(celui, celle)*, or a relative pronoun subject *(qui)* or object *(que);* when the words *before, without, but*, &c. are prepositions *(avant* or *devant, sans, excepté)*, conjunctions *(avant que, sans que, mais)*, or adverbs *(auparavant, dehors, ne que):* when *it, which, what*, &c., are subject, *(il* or *elle, qui, ce qui)*, or object *(le* or *la, que, ce que);* when *will, would, may*, &c., are verbs, or signs of particular tenses; when *loved, sold, taught*, &c., are preterites of the indicative mood or past participles, &c. &c.

The learner, having, in translation, repeatedly ascertained such grammatical distinctions in the instances which present most perplexity, will not afterwards find any difficulty in discriminating between them in all other instances. The fact thus ascertained that the same words in one language correspond, on different occasions, to different words in another, imparts a useful lesson. When not thus exercised, even the most acute understandings find it difficult to believe that things which have a common name have not, in some respect or other, a common nature, and often expend much labour in vain attempts to discover wherein this common nature consists.

Although deficiencies and irregularities abound in all languages, these seldom occur on the same occasions in any two of them. It may be laid down, as a general principle in translation, that no phrase can be rendered literally, the constituent parts of which are, in their arrangement, relations, or meanings, inconsistent with the idea expressed, or with the laws of language, as, for example, the following idioms, *He was offered a situation* (familiarly used for *a situation was offered to him*); *How do you like the book?* (the word *how* signifying *in what manner*, and the whole phrase implying that the person questioned *does* like the book, constitute a double inconsistency with the idea meant;) *I wish I was now at home* (a past time modified by *now*); *to wait on, to call on, to hear from a person* (three verbs used anomalously). See Book VIII. p. 116, for other irregularities of this kind. All such exceptional expressions in the vernacular tongue, which would otherwise escape notice, are elicited by submitting them to the analytical process of rendering them into another language; and the learner, being thus led to inquire what native expressions do or do not conform either to the idea meant or to the general principles of grammar, acquires a habit of nice discrimination and critical knowledge of his own idiom.

SECT. VI.—MODE OF CORRECTION.

The correction of the second version of the double translation, which may be effected independently of a teacher, still further adds to its advantages. The self-instructed learner carefully compares his translation of the first version or of a standard translation with the original text, word for word, sentence for sentence. The impressions which he receives through the eye

of the correctly written expressions, in contrast with his errors, are more deeply engraved in his mind, than if he had, through the ear, obtained the same information from an instructor. He can thus correct what is faulty by the aid of an unerring standard; he receives, in fact, a lesson from the author himself, and attains critical knowledge of the foreign language by a method which is sure, easy, and universal in its application.

In comparing his composition with the original, the learner endeavours to ascertain the principles which regulate the expressions of the author, or to discover the reasons which guided him in the selection of his words and their arrangement. Without making any alteration, the learner simply marks, in his composition, every difference which he finds between it and the original, reserving what is erroneous for future correction from memory. The reflection required on a second consideration of the same subject, to remember the differences previously noticed, must increase the power of memory, and assist in avoiding a recurrence of the same faults. Reflecting on one's errors is the surest way to amend them. Moreover the habit of minute and close comparison must develop the power of observation. By comparing one's own composition with the original, judgment is exercised in discovering defects and discerning beauties: taste is thereby formed and the understanding cultivated.

When this exercise is written under the auspices of a professor, the pupil should, in his composition, establish a distinction between that which he knows to be an error and which requires no explanation, such as *mis-spelling, omission of accents, mistake in gender or number, grammatical discordance,* &c.; and what requires to be explained, such as *a word or phrase substituted for another, omission or inversion of words, difference of construction,* all expressions, in short, which seem to render the idea equally well, or the incorrectness of which is not obvious. He should write over the words or sentences respecting which he doubts, those of the model, and submit both to the teacher. The latter, by comparing them, can give appropriate explanations; he can show in what the sense of his expressions differ from, or how near they approach to that of the original text, and will allow them to stand when they are equally correct; for it must not be forgotten, that the same idea may be expressed in different ways. It sometimes happens that the learner successfully competes with the author; these little literary triumphs greatly enhance the pleasure of these compositions and stimulate to perseverance.

The instructor has, from this parallel, a favourable opportunity of giving to his pupils a species of information not generally found in school books, nor elicited by the correction of grammatical exercises. According to the nature of the questions, he is called upon to elucidate the most intricate points of grammar and style, to explain the various shades of meaning which distinguish the words called synonyms, and to point out the difference between generic and specific terms, proper and figurative expressions, familiar and elegant forms, as well as the different modes of expressing the same idea, or the difference of sense produced by difference of construction; and, in thus discriminating between words, he is necessarily led to discriminate between the things of which they are significant. It is by the frequent recurrence of such incidental and appropriate remarks that reflection and judgment are unfolded, taste formed for the beautiful in style, and the principles of literary criticism are successfully taught. No exercise is better calculated to bring out in the service of the pupils all the literary acquirements of the instructor. Fortunate are those whose teachers can thus supply the deficiencies of books.

The conversational and digressive mode of instruction arising from the correction of double translation is attended to with more eagerness and pleasure than book lessons. It adds to the many advantages of which this exercise is productive, and will prove particularly beneficial in public instruction; for the master, confining himself to what exclusively depends on him, may, without loss of time, initiate all the members of a large class into the idioms and niceties of the language, with the greater effect as his observations are suited to their particular wants. The adaptation also of the double translation to different stages of proficiency renders it convenient for classes, in which all the learners, whatever be their different degrees of advancement, may write the same without prejudice to each other; and the short time needed for the correction of it by the instructor may be, as we have seen, rendered profitable to every one.

Let it not be objected, that learners would be apt to avail themselves of the original text which is in their possession, to copy it entirely, instead of performing the second translation. Such a practice will be improbable, if their conscience have been habitually appealed to, and if they have early imbibed regard for truth. If they are not imbued with these moral principles, they had better abandon every intellectual pursuit and go

through a course of moral training. The age to which we postpone the comparative study of languages permits the teacher to depend, for the right fulfilment of this task, on the honour of the students and on their desire of improvement. But, under the worst circumstances, the second translation may be written in the presence of the parent or instructor; or the text-book may be taken from them, when they are writing the second translation. On the other hand, occasional application to the original text, in aid of the translation and as a substitute for the dictionary, far from being objectionable, ought to be encouraged, as being the means of familiarising beginners with correct orthography and the phraseology of the foreign author.

SECT. VII.—POETICAL DOUBLE TRANSLATION. CHOICE OF A MODEL-BOOK.

If a student, well acquainted with prose writing, is ambitious to ascend higher and be initiated into the mysteries of poetry, he may choose one of the foreign poets for his model-author. Whilst his efforts to transfuse the poetical beauties of his model into elegant prose, or even poetry, if he has a taste for it, would afford him further means of improvement in vernacular composition, the second translation back into the metrical lines of the original, would familiarise him with the mechanism of the foreign verse. This would be the time to study treatises of prosody and versification,—thus combining theory with practice. The retranslation into verse should be made under the guidance of an enlightened professor, who, in correcting it, would have an opportunity to explain the principles of harmony in style, to point out the nicest shades of difference between words, both as regards their meaning and euphony, and to account for the author's motives in giving preference to those he has employed.

The continued search after words of different length, or different sounds, with nearly the same import, and after an harmonious arrangement of them, to suit the measure and rhyme, will greatly serve the learner: it will enlarge his stock of words and phrases, give him readiness in the use of them, familiarise him with inversions and figurative language, and exhibit to him the characteristic difference which exists between familiar and elevated terms, between the style of prose and that of poetry.

The choice of a book for the practice of double translation depends entirely on the particular style one wishes to acquire. In Latin or Greek the standard prose works which may best exhibit the difference of genius between it and the native tongue should, perhaps, be preferred; but, in living languages, the familiar style of conversation or letter-writing being the most generally useful, such works as are likely to aid in acquiring it should be preferred.

Among the works best calculated to answer this purpose in French, those of Bouilly, although not free from defects, seem some of the most useful. Their morality is excellent; their style simple, idiomatic, and elegant. They contain almost every expression used in daily intercourse; and the most familiar topics of which ordinary conversation is composed are diffused through them. By the use of these or similar books, the learner acquires useful materials for speaking, as he advances in the art of writing.

"The Latin which the pupil composes," observes Dumarsais, "ought to be nothing more than the imitation of the Latin which he has seen before." * The Greek and Latin exercises given to boys are usually translations from the classics; and as, on the other hand, the students are constantly engaged in translating those classics into their own language, they may truly be said to write double translation, although not in a manner so open, so direct, or so methodical as the one we recommend.

Roger Ascham used double translation most effectually in teaching Greek and Latin to Queen Elizabeth, as he informs us in his "Schoolmaster:" "And by these authorities and reasons," he says, "am I moved to think this way of *double translation*, either only or chiefly to be fittest for the speedy and perfect attaining of any tongue; and for speech attaining, I durst venture a good wager, if a scholar, in whom is aptness, love, diligence, and constancy, would but translate, after this sort, one little book in Tully, that scholar, I say, should come to a better knowledge in the Latin tongue than the most part do, that spend four or five years in tossing all the rules of grammar in common schools.

"And a better and nearer example herein may be our most noble Queen Elizabeth, who never took yet Greek nor Latin grammar in her hand after the first declining of a noun and a

* *Les Véritables Principes de la Grammaire.*

verb; but only by this double translating of Demosthenes and Isocrates daily without missing, every forenoon, and likewise some part of Tully, every afternoon, for the space of a year or two, has attained to such a ready utterance of the Latin, and that with a judgment as they be few in number in both the universities, or elsewhere in England, that be in both tongues comparable with her Majesty." *

It is obvious that if the double translation, whether in prose or in poetry, be continued for any time, it must prove beneficial. Gibbon informs us that, by persevering in it, he acquired extensive knowledge of Latin and French, and the command of a correct style. "This useful exercise in writing," he adds, "was accompanied and succeeded by the more pleasing occupation of reading the best authors. The perusal of the Roman classics was at once my exercise and reward." † Lord Mansfield, the celebrated rival of Chatham, derived much advantage as a speaker from early double translation of the great orators of antiquity. ‡ "By the double translation," says Sir W. Jones, "more Arabic and Persian will be learned in ten months than can be learned in ten years by any other method." § Among its other advocates we may mention Vossius, Ainsworth, Rollin, Arnauld, La Chalotais, Pluche, Diderot, Bigault d'Harcourt, Weiss, and Guizot. (24.)

Having now explained what we conceive to be a judicious, and know to be a successful, mode of learning to write both the native and the foreign language, there remain to be indicated the various exercises which constitute original composition. But, before entering on this important subject, let us offer a few observations on the usual grammatical and orthographical exercises, for which double translation is intended as a substitute.

* *The Schoolmaster.* † *Memoirs of my Life and Writings.*
‡ E. Plunk. Burke, *The Lives of Eminent English Judges.*
§ *Dissertation sur la Littérature Orientale.*

CHAPTER II.

GRAMMATICAL AND ORTHOGRAPHICAL EXERCISES.

SECT. I.—GRAMMATICAL EXERCISES OBJECTED TO.

IN a preceding chapter we stated, as our opinion, that grammatical rules are not the best starting-point from which to arrive at the practical knowledge of a language. The exercises contrived for the making of Latin and those found in most grammars of foreign living languages, being intended principally to teach these rules, we cannot recommend them as a preliminary in the study,—the more so as writing is inappropriate to its first stage.

Our observations in favour of the study of good models, as the best preparation for writing, are an indirect condemnation of grammatical exercises, or compositions by rules, and might alone justify our objection to them; yet, we cannot refrain from strengthening it by the authority and experience of distinguished professors. Rollin, that judicious, although timid reformer of the errors of the university of Paris, does not hesitate to recommend reading in preference to studying grammar and writing exercises illustrative of it. He observes, "To compose well in Latin, one must know the turns, the idioms, the rules of that language, and have made rather considerable provision of words, the force of which is felt and the just application of which can be made. Now, all this can be done only by explaining authors, who are like a living dictionary and a speaking grammar, in which are learned by experience the force and the true use of words, phrases, and rules of syntax. I do not hesitate to decide that, in the beginning, we must entirely exclude exercises; they are only calculated to torment children by painful and useless labour, and to inspire them with dislike to a study which usually draws on them, from masters, nothing but reprimands and chastisements." *

* *Traité des Etudes.*

"The method of exercises," says Beauzée, "falls every day into greater discredit in consequence of the wise reflections diffused through the excellent works of the most skilful instructors and the most respectable writers, Lefèvre de Saumur, Vossius the elder, Rollin, Pluche, Chompré, &c. It is to be wished that this discredit may increase, and that people will confine themselves entirely to translation, either oral or written, from the foreign language into the native." *

Rollin, Beauzée, and the scholars mentioned by the latter, are supported in their disapprobation of grammatical exercises by almost all writers who have treated of classical instruction. Unwilling to swell our work with quotations, of which we have perhaps already been too prodigal, we shall be content with naming, among those who condemn the practice, Roger Ascham, Locke, Milton, Montaigne, Lancelot, Nicole, Arnauld, Diderot, D'Alembert, J. J. Rousseau, Fleury, Bernardin de St. Pierre, Radonvilliers, Niemeyer, La Châlotais, Maugard, Weiss, Wyse, and Guizot. (25.)

To these may be added the celebrated scholars whom we named in the Book on Grammar, as most profoundly erudite without having ever learned grammar or written exercises. Among them we will particularly mention Madame Dacier, whose translations and commentaries are well known in the literary world. Her father, Tanaquil Lefèvre, one of the scholars above alluded to by Beauzée, had a son whom, in less than three years, and by oral translation alone, he had enabled to read the greater number of historians and almost all the epic and dramatic poets, both Greek and Latin. This child having died at the age of thirteen, his father thought to alleviate his sorrow by bestowing the same care on his daughter, and subjecting her to the same course of classic reading. This lady's example is, among many others, a striking evidence against the assertion of those who pretend that writing exercises is necessary for understanding the construction of Latin and Greek.

Not only are written grammatical exercises unnecessary for gaining acquaintance with the genius of a language, but they afford very little assistance towards acquiring the art of composition, which is the result only of assiduous reading and reiterated imitation of good authors. They are, at the outset, even prejudicial, because the errors, which their untimely use renders unavoidable, are often confirmed rather than counteracted by

* *Encyclopédie Méthodique.*

ulterior practice. In writing an exercise as the illustration of a rule, the student may perhaps, so far as the rule directs him, do it correctly; but how is he, in a complicated sentence, to write that part of it for which no direction has been given? There are in such sentences subordinate parts for which no rule is given, and which are often more numerous than those to which the rule itself applies; the consequence is that such parts will often be translated incorrectly, and more time will be employed upon this incorrect portion of the exercise, than upon that which exemplifies the rule.

The benefit resulting from grammatical exercises, does not sufficiently compensate for the fretful thumbing of a dictionary which they impose on the learner, and the considerable time which they consume; because their sphere of usefulness is very limited: a thousand exceptions counteract the principles which they are intended to illustrate. They can, at best, only lead to the mechanical structure of a phraseology devoid of the graces of style and of the idiomatic language prevalent in good society. "To speak grammatically," says Quintilian, "is one thing, to speak Latin is another." *

How can these unconnected school-phrases give young people a perception of the beautiful, or enable them to enter into the spirit of classical composition? Before they get over the difficulties presented by such elements, what a tedious way have they to drag along! The writing of exercises is, of all school-practices, perhaps the most prejudicial to the progress of learners: it consumes most time, produces most discouragement, confirms the worst habits, and exercises the understanding less than any other. The absurdity of this practice is so obvious that the obstinacy with which it is still persevered in would be a cause of surprise, were it not explained by the force of habit in the case of old teachers: it has been accounted for in the case of novices in the profession. (See Book v. p. 342.)

Many persons, unwilling to reject the method of grammatical exercises, although aware of its defects, have endeavoured to improve it by removing the difficulties attendant on writing in a language before it is known. But the remedy proves as bad as the evil; and it must be so; for, when we are once out of the right path of nature, every step we take leads us astray. Some Latin exercise books and the greater number of grammars which have of late been written for the students of foreign living

* "Aliud est grammatici, aliud latinè loqui."—*Inst. Orat.*, Lib. i. Cap. vii.

languages, contain, under the rules, exercises in which their authors contrive every means in their power to facilitate the observance of those rules, and spare young people the trouble of reflecting: they give not only the foreign words, but their order; they indicate the gender and number, mood and tense, and point out when words are to be omitted or supplied. Learners mechanically avail themselves of this assistance, without inquiring into the difference of idiom between the two languages, often even without reading the rule, before they write the exercise; not unfrequently remaining ignorant of the rule which it was the purport of the exercise to teach, and acquiring habits of mental indolence.

Young people, also, for the sake of expedition, commonly translate the native words one after another into the foreign language, without troubling themselves about the sense conveyed by the combination of those words; so that if, afterwards, they have similar ideas to express in that language, they receive no aid whatever from the exercises which they have written. But, were they even to attend to the sense, while they thus translate the heterogeneous miscellany of their exercise-book, still they would lose sight of what should be their chief aim, namely, expression of their own thoughts and acquisition of style; for the exclusive practice of translating the words of others is not conducive to originality, nor are unconnected phrases, however grammatically correct, conducive to the formation of style.

Grammatical exercises are, in these respects, very inferior to double-translation, in which learners express, by their second version, connected ideas which they have appropriated by the first; they again yield to it in two essential points,—they neglect altogether the great principle of imitation and provide no means of improvement in the native tongue.

The correction of grammatical exercises by the professor involves considerable expenditure of time and is almost impracticable in public instruction. However short the exercises may be, a few minutes are required for the inspection of each; and, in a class of only twelve or fifteen learners, more than an hour may be spent in this occupation: so that each has the benefit but of the few minutes given by the teacher to the correction of his exercise,—the others, meanwhile, remaining unemployed. To avoid so great a waste of time, some teachers neglect altogether this part of their duty, while others, in their hurry

through it, cannot adduce reasons or rules in support of the required alterations.

Adults learning in large classes or by themselves, and anxious to be practical grammarians, may, however, indulge in this kind of exercise and correct their errors themselves, by comparing their performance with a key. But, before consulting it, they should carefully ascertain that they have not violated the rule which the exercise illustrates: and when, with its aid, they notice their mistakes, they should not make the requisite alterations without reference to the grammar. Nine-tenths of the governesses who teach French in this country, privately use such a book to prepare for the correction *at sight* of the exercises of their pupils, to whom they would certainly render greater service, if they showed them how to correct their own mistakes by comparing themselves what they have written with the corresponding text of the key.*

SECT. II.—TRANSLATION FROM A NATIONAL AUTHOR INTO A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

Inappropriate and inefficient as are grammatical exercises for acquiring the art of composition in a foreign language, they are, in evil consequences, far surpassed by the practice of translating, in the first stages of the study, from a national author into a foreign language. To enter upon the study of it by writing in it, is to begin at the wrong end, at what is most difficult; it is, in fact, to attempt what is impossible. Is there anything more preposterous than to impose on learners the task of writing in a language of which they are ignorant? The defects of such a course are so palpable that it is surprising how it could ever have been recommended.

To employ in translating the most appropriate expressions, those which most exactly convey the ideas of the original text, requires great command of the language into which one translates, that is, a large stock of words and perfect acquaintance with their various acceptations, as also practical knowledge of its idiomatical structure and figurative forms: it presents, as we have before observed, great obstacles even to those most conversant with the language. How infinitely greater must the

* Most French grammars published in this country have "keys" for their exercises.

obstacles be to him who wishes to translate from the native into a foreign tongue which he is learning! It is an absurdity of the same kind as that of reading aloud before having sufficiently heard the sounds. Neither the pronunciation nor the construction can be discovered by the greatest efforts of genius: the ear and the eye must communicate them to the mind before imitation can reproduce them.

Dictionaries will give but little assistance in this respect: all the objections which, in the Book on Reading, were brought against them, have double force against their use in translating into a foreign language. Great, indeed, must be the perplexity of a learner in choosing, from many unknown words, that which expresses the idea of his author, when we reflect that, even in writing our own language, the national lexicons themselves are sufficiently embarrassing. "When," says Dugald Stewart, "I consult Johnson's Dictionary, I find many words of which he has enumerated forty, fifty, or sixty different significations, and, after all the pains he has taken to distinguish these from each other, I am frequently at a loss to avail myself of his definitions."*

But, if we could suppose that, by some lucky chance, a beginner has hit on the right foreign words, in what order shall he place them?—are any to be left out, and which?—what new ones shall he introduce? for the corresponding expressions of two languages are rarely composed of the same number of words. Here he meets new perplexities, nay, impossibilities. No one who is not already practically conversant with the genius and phraseology of a language, can know when it admits, or does not admit, of rendering literally the forms of another; when it has, or has not, equivalent idiomatic and figurative expressions; much less can he know what are these expressions and what degree of elegance or vulgarity attaches to them. No knowledge of grammar can supply this information. The greater the judgment or anxiety of a student, the more embarrassed must he be, because the more conscious of the difficulty; whilst the thoughtless or indolent learner feels no hesitation; he is apt to take the first words he finds in his dictionary, and write them in the order in which they occur in his own language. To write in a foreign idiom, whether from a national author or from an exercise-book, is, as already stated, a purely mechanical operation, at an early stage of the study. When we reflect that

* *Philosophical Essays*, Ess. v.

groping thus in the dark and poring over the most uninteresting of all works, dictionaries and exercise-books, to accomplish the most irrational of all tasks, is the chief occupation to which many children are doomed for years, we cannot wonder that they leave school with intellect beneath their age, uncultivated taste, and hatred of books and teachers.

Translation from the native into a foreign language has, it is true, one advantage in the case of learners as yet deficient in vernacular orthography; constant use of the dictionary obliges them to attend closely to the composition of the native words, in order to find the corresponding foreign terms; and thus it teaches them the vernacular as well as the foreign orthography. But this trifling incidental benefit cannot be considered sufficient compensation for the manifold evils entailed upon the learner by this practice; because, as will subsequently be seen, there are many other ways, more direct, speedy, and efficient, of learning orthography.

Some persons, pretending to make learners write or speak foreign languages at the outset, have compiled books exclusively designed for translating English into them *at sight*, as they call it. The exercises of these books, accompanied as they are with all the interpretations and directions which can facilitate them, are not liable to the same objections as translating from a national author; but they have all the defects which characterise grammatical exercises, they require no mental effort, present no model for imitation, call no power of analogy into action, and confine the learner to a narrow circle of ideas, to unconnected and unvaried phraseology. Far from enabling him to attain the proposed end, the longer they are continued the less chance has he of gaining the facility and independence of composition, the perspicuous and idiomatic style desirable for the expression of thought in social and active life. Translation into a foreign living language is more preposterous still when performed orally, as the pronunciation presents new obstacles, especially to beginners. This is the practice recommended above all others by De Porquet, and on which his method is based. But the most remarkable feature of that method lies in the eccentricity of the suggestion, that, in the study of a foreign language, the power of imitation ought to be laid aside and invention substituted in its place. He strongly warns those who wish to converse in French against the *useless exercise* of translating it into their own, that is, against familiarising

themselves with the various import of its words or the idiomatic form of its phraseology, as established by good writers.*

It is particularly difficult to translate into French, owing to its extreme precision of expression and uniformity of construction. This language does not admit of inversion or transposition, and, therefore, cannot easily follow the multifarious forms of other languages. The more transpositive a language is, the more facilities it affords for expressing the ideas conveyed in another: and, in this respect, English, German, and still more, Italian possess great advantage over the French. But even the most transpositive idioms present insurmountable difficulties to the translator. Let not then the time and ardour of the learner be wasted in vain attempts at translating what is untranslatable, in doing what his instructor, whatever be his skill, could not do himself; for we feel no hesitation in asserting that the best English scholars, among the foreign teachers in the three kingdoms, would be incapable of translating at sight with ease and correctness any English or foreign standard work.

When some command of the foreign tongue is gained, translation from the native into it may sometimes be desirable. A judicious professor or an adult learner may judge of the opportunity for such practice; but, when this occurs, we would observe, that many of the objections which have been brought against it might be obviated, by using for a text-book, as already suggested, a well-written and faithful translation of a standard work in the foreign language. This exercise will partake of some of the advantages of the double translation, if the original happen to be one of the works which served for the acquisition of the first branch. Under any circumstance, students could refer to it when a difficulty occurs, and could correct their own compositions, whilst a teacher might further improve the style of his pupils by comparing their performances with the model-work.

Although this exercise is preferable to the usual grammatical exercises and to translating from a national author into the foreign language, it should not exclusively engage the attention of a learner; for, even in the case of a proficient, it keeps up a practice inconsistent with the desired end—the *direct* expression of one's own thoughts. This is the chief object which the student must always keep in view; and nothing but practice in

* See *The Fenwickian System or Guide for Teaching and Learning the French Language* &c. &c. 1839.

original writing can ensure it. If double-translation furnishes a beginner with the materials of language and leads to the acquisition of good style, original composition alone accustoms the proficient to use these materials for the expression of his own thoughts. However, before original essays in a foreign or the native tongue be ventured upon, orthography, concordance, syntactical construction and punctuation should be familiar to the learner: for deficiency in these elementary points, by calling for the frequent correction of the professor, would divert attention from the style and the thought, which ought to be his chief objects of consideration in the inspection of original essays. Effective as is double-translation towards acquiring these first elements of good writing, it cannot fail to receive considerable aid from acquaintance with the rules of the language; we therefore refer the reader to the preceding Book, Chap. II., Sect. II, in which is unfolded the method by which grammar is rendered a help to speaking and writing.

SECT. III.—ORTHOGRAPHICAL EXERCISES.

1. *Dictation, vocabulary learning, and correction of false spelling, objected to.*

Familiarity with the orthography of a foreign language results from the manner in which that language is acquired. Foreign words are, in fact, chiefly learned through the organ of sight, as native words are acquired through the organ of hearing: orthography is as necessarily acquired in the one case as pronunciation in the other. The deaf and dumb who are taught to write, seldom commit orthographical errors, because they are not, like other men, led astray by the pronunciation. A person learning a foreign language through books, is similarly circumstanced with the deaf and dumb as regards orthography; he requires no special exercise for gaining familiarity with it.

Dictation, so generally resorted to, is inefficient as an orthographical exercise. In Italian and Spanish, the conformity of the orthography with the pronunciation renders it utterly useless. So uniform is the power of the letters in these languages, that to pronounce an Italian or a Spanish word is to spell it. In German, dictation is not much more useful, because the same letters, usually representing the same sounds and articulations,

it suffices to know the power of their alphabetical characters to deduce the spelling of the words from their sounds. In French, it may assist in teaching the orthography, provided the learner is made acquainted with the principles of orthoëpy and etymology, as also with the rules of grammatical concord which govern the inflection of words. But this part of the English language can never be taught through dictation, either to natives or foreigners. He who knows the spelling of an English word derives no benefit from writing it, and he who is not previously acquainted with it, will seldom be able to spell it from hearing.

In any language in which the orthography does not exactly correspond to the pronunciation, dictation is inefficient, since the writer has, thereby, no clue by which he can infer the mode of writing it from the manner in which it is uttered. This exercise, however, can be very useful as a test by which to ascertain the pupil's progress in spelling; for, although it cannot prevent the commission of errors, it affords the means of detecting and correcting them. But, viewed even in this light, dictation should not be practised frequently; because, for one word that the child may, by this means, learn to spell, he wastes time in writing a great many which he knew before. This is purchasing too dearly a species of information which can be easily acquired conjointly with higher departments of composition. Dictation is so universally resorted to, only because it gives little trouble to the instructor and demands on his part neither talent nor information.

We will now advert to two other practices equally inefficient in teaching orthography, and which should be discarded from the instruction of youth. The one, most generally adopted, and, perhaps, the most irksome of all the tasks inflicted upon children, consists in making them commit to memory columns of unconnected words in a dictionary or spelling-book, with the double object of learning their orthography and signification. This practice is injudicious, both in the foreign and in the native tongue; for it reverses the natural order of things: the ability to spell correctly is the consequence of familiarity with the written words gained from reading, and cannot be made an introduction to the study of languages. It is by recollecting how a word looks and not how it sounds that we are enabled to spell it. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that knowledge of orthography is required for writing, not for speaking, and, therefore, consistently with this end, the fingers, not the lips,

should be formed to such habits as would enable the learner to write the words correctly, without premeditation. His eye ought, under the influence of correct impressions, to direct his hand, as in acquiring the pronunciation the ear directs the tongue. Transcribing words will more effectually assist the memory in retaining their orthography than oral repetition of them. The greater number of those who learn the dictionary as an exercise in spelling do not go through one half of it, and yet they usually know the words of the second half as well as those of the first, a fact which obviously proves the uselessness of the exercise. The second object proposed from this mnemonic exercise is equally defeated; for the import of words, as it has previously been remarked, cannot, in general, be fully ascertained when they are considered separately. It is from reading and from the conversation of those who speak well, that the precise and various meanings of words must be learned.

In repeating words, the child, anxious to have the task over, often utters in one breath their spelling, their synonyms, and their definitions, as given in his vocabulary, without attending to the ideas represented by these words: so that the judgment having no participation in this mechanical repetition, no impression is left on his mind either of their orthography or of their meaning. The lesson is no sooner over than he has probably forgotten every word of it. How then can it be supposed that he derives from this exercise the expected information, or any advantage adequate to the time and trouble devoted to it.

The other practice consists in presenting to children for correction portions of language written with a false orthography; an exercise useless for those who spell correctly, and absurd for those who do not. If a learner previously knows the right spelling of the words to be altered, it is obvious that there cannot be any difficulty, merit, or improvement in making these alterations; and if he is ignorant of the spelling, it is impossible that he can effect the suitable changes, the exercise of reflection being of no avail in so arbitrary a thing as etymological orthography. His knowledge of the pronunciation, far from producing the desired result, could only lead him astray; for the very errors which are introduced in these orthographical exercises are mostly founded on a conformity of the written form with the spoken language, and that conformity, consistent with reason, would rather incline him to adopt these errors, if he should use his judgment. The erroneous impressions which the eye receives

from these misspelled words foster bad habits. He who has seen a word spelled in two ways,—correctly and incorrectly,—will be more likely to err in writing it than he who has always seen it correctly spelled. Exercises in cacography produce nothing but confusion and perplexity in the mind of a learner. What must be the baneful effect of this method when the child, at his entrance upon the study of a language, receives his first impressions of a large portion of its written form from inaccurate spelling.

The correction of false syntax is not, it is true, as irrational as that of false spelling, since it may be said in its favour that it affords a means of putting the learner's knowledge of rules to the test; yet, we prefer the direct mode of instruction, by which he is made either to produce forms of expression illustrative of grammar, or to notice those of a standard work which exemplify the rules of the language. Whatever be the department of composition aimed at,—orthography, syntax, or style,—the study of good models is the surest way of learning to write correctly. When it is so easy to show a child the right road, why take him through all the crooked paths which can be imagined! In every department of education it is more judicious to present good examples to be followed than bad ones to be avoided. Vice is surely not the medium through which a child can be led to the practice of virtue.

Among those who, on this subject, hold the same opinion with us, may be mentioned Dumarsais, Matter, and Girard. The latter says,—"Whence do they take those subjects of cacology and cacography? From good writers, whose expressions and style they spoil for that perpose. This is, in my opinion, a profanation which should not be permitted. Let us, by proper means, prevent children from committing errors, and let us carefully correct those which escape them when they speak or write: thereby we shall attain more safely the end which certain grammarians aim at in their miserable collections of exercises in bad spelling and bad grammar." *

* *Enseignement Régulier de la Langue Maternelle.*

2. *Modes of acquiring orthography.*

Whatever may be said for or against any special orthographical exercises, they evidently are less requisite in the foreign than in the vernacular tongue. In the latter the child being, at first, acquainted only with the articulate words, requires to be taught their corresponding orthography. In the foreign language, on the contrary, knowledge of the orthography is, we repeat it, the natural consequence of the manner in which the language is learned, since the written form is constantly under the consideration of the learner; he only requires to be taught the corresponding pronunciation. The foreign orthography will be the more certainly secured, if, in reading the first works, and, especially, in second perusals, attention be duly directed to the material form of words. Its acquisition will also receive considerable aid from the double-translation, an exercise which, while it aims at higher acquirements, forwards the learner in the correct spelling of both languages. The second translation, as before mentioned, leads to accuracy in spelling the foreign words, and the first in spelling the native, if a dictionary is resorted to in all doubtful cases.

Although carefully inspecting and correcting written composition tend to improve learners in orthography, a professor may still render them valuable service by occasionally directing their attention expressly to this elementary department of composition in either the native or a foreign language. Let him, instead of dictating to them a consecutive passage, read on until he comes to words the spelling of which may present some difficulty. These words he either desires his pupils to write, or he questions them on their spelling; he then, as occasion requires, states to them the etymological principle or grammatical concord which governs their orthography; he explains the phonographical law on which the alphabetical system of writing is founded, and points out the irregularities to which this law is liable; he finally illustrates his remarks by exhibiting, on the black board, words which are alike in spelling and different in sound, or *vice versâ*, similar in sound and different in orthography. This practice would avoid the waste of time which results from ordinary dictation, and would, besides, impart valuable information.

As another means of learning orthography, we will suggest

the practice of extracting from the best works which the student reads the passages most remarkable for beauty of style, or justness of thought, interesting anecdotes, striking truths, and maxims. These extracts would necessarily draw attention to the orthography, at the same time that they would give correct habits of writing, cultivate taste for literature, exercise judgment in reading, and furnish useful ideas,—objects vastly more important than mere knowledge of spelling. One may be free from errors in orthography and pronunciation, and be withal very ignorant.

A third exercise in orthography consists in writing from memory pieces of prose or poetry. This practice tends to make learners careful in noticing the spelling, while committing to memory; it creates a habit of attention, and adds to the usefulness of mnemonic lessons. This and the preceding exercise possess two other advantages of which dictation is destitute,—they enable learners to attend to the punctuation, and to correct their errors themselves by comparing their written copy with the model.

The different kinds of composition which are recommended in the next chapter, will further tend to familiarise learners with the orthography.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION.

SECT. I.—PHRASEOLOGICAL EXERCISES—IDIOMATIC AND SYNTACTIC ILLUSTRATIONS.

To complete our suggestions on the art of writing in a foreign language, we will point out a series of progressive exercises which may alternate with the double translation, and through which skill in original composition may be attained.

Original composition simply consists in writing, instead of speaking, the ideas which are actually in the mind. If learners select subjects which are familiar to them, they will find no difficulty in composing, that is, in writing what they can readily say in conversation. Composition should then be for them the fruit of past labour, the mere application of the words and phraseology acquired from reading, hearing, and phrase-making to the expression of their own thoughts. The exercises by which these objects may be accomplished, must be analogous to those resorted to for acquiring the art of speaking, especially when, in the case of the living languages, writing is considered as an auxiliary to speaking.

In the preceding book we have adverted to the practice of forming, in the intervals of the lessons, phraseological variations on the verbs, in which ideas are expressed in the foreign language without the intervening medium of the native: this process, introduced in writing, will extend the benefit of the phrase-making exercise, and serve as an easy introduction to original composition. If the sentences arise from ideas originating in the learner's own mind, and if their construction conform to the simplicity of the first native phrases of infancy, they may be ventured upon from the moment he has mastered a verb in its different forms,—affirmative, interrogative, and negative. Let him, when combining its various moods, tenses, persons and forms with such words as make complete propositions, endeavour to

write the foreign sentences as the immediate signs of his ideas, and without putting on paper the native expressions in which these ideas may have been originally conceived; for it must not be forgotten, that, this exercise having for its double object to assist the learner in speaking his thoughts readily, and to enable him to write them as he does in his own language, the means should be consistent with the end.

The more easily to accomplish this object, the learner should, at first, confine himself to the verbs of each day's lesson, and to forms of expression similar to those which he has practised orally with his teacher, as also to the use of words and phrases so familiar to him that he can readily divest himself of the corresponding native ones: no matter how common, homely, or even childish may be the theme, if, by this practice, he acquires the habit of writing his own ideas, directly and with ease, in the foreign language. Let him introduce in these initiatory compositions the progressive combinations which have been recommended for speaking, proceeding very gradually from the simplest to the most complicated propositions,—from detached sentences to connected discourse, until, after persevering for some time in this practice, he attains the power of composing without the intervening medium of the native tongue,—the fourth and last stage in *mental language*.

Two other exercises may be mentioned, which will be found useful to the learner at his entrance on the practice of original composition: They consist in illustrating idioms and grammatical principles peculiar to the foreign language. These exercises will present no difficulty, if he have already made similar illustrations orally under the direction of his instructor. But the analogical variations of idioms may be practised before the phraseology illustrative of grammar; because greater facilities are afforded by the analytical process of composing sentences from model expressions than by the synthetical process of forming them from given rules. The latter exercise will, in its turn, prove most valuable; for no intellectual acquirement is permanent, which does not rest on the knowledge and application of principles.

The idiomatical and syntactical model expressions may be taken either from a select collection of phrases, or from standard works,—the learner composing his phraseological variations by modifying these model expressions in the manner which has been explained for acquiring the art of speaking. This was a

favourite exercise with Fénélon for initiating his pupil, the grandson of Louis XIV., into the Latin phraseology, as we see in a manuscript in his own hand-writing, deposited in the Imperial Library in Paris.

Written variations on model phrases may be practised without the assistance of an instructor, provided the verb which enters into their composition be perfectly known; for if the student introduce none but words with which he is well acquainted, he can fail only in the manner of arranging them; and mistakes of this nature may easily be ascertained and corrected by reference to the model-phrase.

These original compositions possess the principal qualities which should characterise written exercises: they familiarise the learner with the verbs, syntax, idioms, and genius of the foreign language; they accustom him early to express his own ideas, and give him command of phraseology. But what makes them pre-eminently useful is the exercise which, searching for ideas and forming combinations by analogy, afford to his judgment and memory, as well as to his powers of imitation and invention.

SECT. II.—IMITATIVE COMPOSITIONS.

Connected composition would present little difficulty to a person skilled in forming detached sentences; for these, by means of connective terms, are easily formed into continuous subjects. But, as an intermediate step between the preceding exercises and original essays, the student may occasionally write narratives from recollection, and in imitation of good writers,—anecdotes, historical facts, or passages from standard works,—previously read, heard, or studied with that intention, an exercise corresponding to that already recommended for acquiring the art of speaking, and to which we refer the reader for further directions (Book x., Chap. III., Sect. II). The learner should, as in the case of oral narrations, take these from the foreign works, and, especially, if possible, from the book which he is at the time engaged in reading; for the words and phraseology which in his book directly suggested the ideas, would, from the association thus formed, be likely to present themselves to his mind when he wishes to express the same ideas. He, at first, should leave but a short interval between reading or hearing, and writing them, and increase it gradually as he gains proficiency.

The oral and the written narratives may, in the commencement, be made to assist each other: this the learner effects by writing the one which he last repeated to his instructor, or, *vice versâ*, narrating the one which he has previously written.

Such short imitative compositions, or written summaries, will, in the foreign as in the native tongue, preclude the necessity for the orthographical exercises to which we have alluded in the preceding Chapter. They will engage the learner's attention on the spelling of words, as well as on their arrangement; on ideas as well as on their expression. Transcribing, although the most efficient of orthographical exercises, yields in usefulness to these compositions: it does not, as has been remarked, impress on the memory the subject of what is copied; because the attention is directed to the individual words rather than to their corresponding ideas, or their logical dependencies. In composing from recollection, on the contrary, the mental powers are directed towards the subject-matter; words become secondary, and serve only as instruments with which to analyse what passes in the mind. Should memory fail, imagination and judgment come in aid to supply deficiencies. The constant efforts which are made to select the proper words and place them in their proper order, teach to think and reason as well as to compose,—so great is the connection between thoughts and the words that represent them.

When learners have, by these essays, acquired some command of language, their compositions must rise in character and increase in difficulty: descriptive and argumentative subjects should, in due time and alternately, engage their attention. But, the better to effect this, they should not be satisfied with hearing or reading on the subjects to be treated of, they should themselves minutely examine what they wish to describe, and should fully discuss with their instructor, the points on which they have to write an argumentative dissertation. Compositions of a purely narrative character, resting on the concatenation of incidents, exercise more especially memory and imagination: whereas descriptions and dissertations, without rejecting the aid of these two faculties, call for higher intellectual powers: the first requires accurate investigation of things, and nice discrimination in classifying the subject; the second depends chiefly on judgment and strict attention to logical relations. The more minute the description and the more philosophical the dissertation, the greater will be the demand on the reflective and reasoning

powers of the students; the more extensive also will be the technological vocabulary brought into their service.

Although the writing of Latin be little required, we may suggest, as a means of facilitating it, that the Latin compositions which are written in imitation of the ancient classics—as an exercise in reproducing their text,—should increase in length and rise in importance, so as to keep pace with the progress of the students in the explanation of the classics. Being thus enabled to use as models the standard authors which successively engage their attention through the course of their studies, improvement in reading and writing would be greatly promoted by the mutual assistance which these two branches of the study would afford to each other.

SECT. III.—ORIGINAL ESSAYS.

When reading, phrase-making, double translation, written narratives, and the study of grammar, have familiarised a student with the orthography, idioms, and sytactical structure of the language; when he begins to speak and write his thoughts readily and without the intervention of his own language; when, above all, he has enriched his mind with an extensive stock of ideas and words, and improved his taste by assiduous and critical study of the great models, then it is time to set aside all assistance, and depend, in his composition, entirely on his own resources;—the transition from free imitation to an independent and manly use of a foreign language will present no difficulty.

Original essays, whether in a foreign or in the native tongue, should, in the commencement, principally be of a narrative character, as offering less difficulty than any other kind of composition, and being more applicable to conversation or correspondence. Let the student, at first, condense in one or two pages, the matter of the last volume which he has been reading, and occasionally introduce some critical remarks of his own, on the style and sentiments of the author, or on the merit and tendency of his work. He will soon find that he can, with perfect ease, extend the matter to many pages. But he must be careful to avoid diffuseness and redundancy—very common defects of young writers. If these abstracts be given in his own words, and by thinking in the foreign idiom, the reflection which he bestows on what has lately been the subject of his reading,

in order to collect, condense, and arrange his ideas, will change fugitive impressions into lasting recollections, and develope in him great powers of expression as well as of observation.

Perseverance in these compositions will ensure facility and correctness of expression, which will render the student altogether independent of models. He may afterwards attempt essays of a higher order and which demand greater power of invention: he may treat, according to his particular genius, any subject with which he is conversant,—a parallel, a panegyric, an historical fact, a descriptive piece, an account of a journey, the review or analysis of some work, a dissertation on a scientific, moral, or philosophical question. But, although these subjects suit the proficient in a foreign language, we think them better adapted to native composition, and would recommend to students of a living language to indulge more especially in colloquial and epistolary style, as the most likely to be required in after-life.

Whatever be the nature of the composition which the student undertakes to write, he should, before taking the pen, make himself complete master of the subject: having first defined it and fixed on the point of view in which he proposes to treat it, he ought, next, to consider its various bearings, and arrange them into suitable heads according to their logical dependencies. These being once clearly laid down in his mind, he may, with safety, enter upon details and attend to considerations of style.

Among the many qualities which constitute good style, the most indispensable, and those to which, in most cases, the learner's ambition ought to be confined in writing a foreign language, are *correctness* and *perspicuity*. The first will be secured by close attention to propriety of terms, the rules of syntax, and a construction strictly conformable to the genius of the language; the second, by avoiding ambiguous words, parenthetical phrases, long periods, and contracted forms of speech, which all equally tend to produce obscurity. Rules for the attainment of these, or any other qualities of style, are very numerous; but, as they may be found in every treatise on the art of writing, we will here only briefly state that the perfection of original composition will mainly depend on thorough acquaintance with the subject, extensive knowledge of words and their various acceptations, mastery of the grammar and the idiom of the language. To treat a subject with correctness, perspicuity, and brevity, force, elegance, and harmony, demands a mind highly cultivated and taste formed by the study of the great models.

We would advise students, when they write compositions, not to be over timid in the choice or arrangement of words, and not to aim too soon at faultless productions, as, by doing so, they would be apt to employ only such expressions as they already know, and thereby remain stationary. They should occasionally attempt the idiomatic, syntactic, and figurative forms, of the correctness of which they are uncertain, that the professor, on perceiving their deficiencies, may communicate to them general principles for their future guidance. They should, in fact, submit their performances to him not to obtain compliments but instruction.

A good exercise is not that which is free from error, but that which affords the instructor opportunity to communicate information, correct false notions, and assist his pupils in overcoming difficulties. The errors which spring from ignorance are a source of improvement; those which arise from inattention are, on the contrary, the bane of instruction; and, to guard against them, learners should always carefully revise their compositions before submitting them to the inspection of the professor. Such a practice is indispensable to good writing; the habit must be early formed by those who wish to attain critical correctness of style. All the great writers of ancient and modern times, who are distinguished for purity of style, among others, Demosthenes, Cicero, Horace, Pope, Johnson, Edmund Burke, Bossuet, Boileau, Racine, were remarkable for the extreme care with which they revised and corrected their productions before they allowed them to meet the eye of the public. Voltaire, by his own acknowledgment, corrected every day some of his works.* D'Israeli observes that the manuscripts of Tasso still preserved are illegible from the vast number of corrections.† Those of Pope, which may be seen in the British Museum, are covered with erasures and interlineations. T. B. Macaulay states, in one of his admirable essays, that he has in his possession the variations in a fine stanza of Ariosto, which the poet has altered a hundred times. Petrarch is said to have made forty-four alterations in one verse. Pascal was frequently engaged for twenty days in writing some of his Provincial Letters. He recommenced several of them seven or eight times; and, by this means, obtained that perfection which has made his work, says Voltaire, "one of the best books ever published in France."

* *Mélanges Littéraires—Aux Auteurs du Nouvelliste.*
† *Curiosities of Literature—Literary Composition.*

Gibbon wrote his Memoirs six times over. Buffon wrote his "Epoques de la Nature" eighteen times before he allowed them to appear in print. "The infallible sign of mediocrity is self-admiration; it produces rapidly and corrects little . . . . A great mind, on the contrary, is almost always dissatisfied with its own performance."*

To approach perfection in writing a foreign language, the same means should be employed as for native composition. A person who wishes to excel must, in addition to much practice in reading and writing, study, as recommended, for acquiring the art of speaking, literary criticisms and the best works on the art of composition and on all grammatical, rhetorical, and logical subjects. It is the business of a professor to direct his advanced pupils in the choice and use of such as are suitable to them. These works will correct mistakes, supply deficiencies, and suggest improvement in the higher departments of writing. But it must never be forgotten that the best lessons of composition are to be found in the contemplation of nature, knowledge of the human heart, and the study of the great writers: these are the sources from which all ideas and all rules are derived. Nor should the care which expression demands ever divert attention from the subject-matter: it is easier to clothe in beautiful terms a trivial or foolish idea than to convey pleasing thoughts, noble sentiments, or valuable information. The learner should bear in mind the precept of Horace; "Scribendi rectè sapere est et principium et fons."†

SECT. IV.—ASSISTANCE TO BE GIVEN BY THE TEACHER.

Inspection of written compositions would afford to a professor thoroughly versed in the foreign idiom the most favourable opportunity of promoting the knowledge of his pupils in that idiom. This observation more particularly applies to a foreigner teaching his own language. With regard to professors of ancient literature, we again repeat, that they would render far more valuable service to their pupils, if they confined their instruction to native composition, which they are likely to understand much better than Latin or Greek. But, whether native or foreign composition be submitted to a teacher, he

* Victor Cousin, *Philosophie Populaire. Remarques sur le style de J. J. Rousseau.*
† "Knowledge is the principle and source of good writing." *De Arte Poetica.*

cannot do justice to it, unless he be a thorough critic. It is not sufficient for him to be complete master of the definitions and rules given in treatises of grammar or rhetoric, he should be able, if not to compose such treatises himself, at least to comment on them, illustrate their principles, and correct the errors into which their authors may have fallen.

In correcting the exercises of his pupils, a professor ought gradually to direct his criticisms and suggestions to the various departments which contribute to the perfection of written composition, namely, the orthography, the grammar, the style, and the thought. The explanation and analysis of standard authors furnish him with the means of unfolding to them the theory of good writing—the correction of their exercises enables him to promote their progress in the practice.

As the compositions of learners rise in importance and gain accuracy, consistently with their proficiency, so the observations and corrections of the teacher should rise with the gradual advancement of his class. With beginners, young children especially, he should avoid noticing many kinds of errors at a time; for they would be confused and discouraged by multiplicity of criticism. He should, at first, chiefly attend to their hand-writing, and correct all errors in the use of capitals and the division of sentences, in orthography, accent, and in the application of the most common principles of grammar. A habit of accuracy in the lesser part of composition will assist in the higher.

With more advanced learners the professor directs attention to the choice of words, their places, and the modifications which they undergo according to their syntactic relations; he notices all violations of grammar and absence of punctuation. After a time, and by degrees, he attends to the essentials of good style—precision, perspicuity, and grace, suitableness of figures, harmony of construction, and the verbal arrangement which constitutes a climax or an antithesis; he points out ambiguity of expression, redundancy of words, tautology of sense, absence of euphony, and trivial, awkward, or inelegant phraseology. Finally, in the upper classes, he comments on want of accuracy in statement, of propriety in sentiment, of originality in conception, of soundness in reasoning, of logical connection in the parts, of unity in the plan; in a word, he reforms all that is contrary to taste and reason.

When an instructor reads to his pupils subjects for composition,

he should progressively increase the length of the narrative, in order to proportion the difficulty of the exercise to their advancement: and, in devising subjects for essays, he should, at first, be sparing of speculative or purely metaphysical matters. These should be reserved for the most advanced stage of instruction, when the intellectual powers have reached their highest development, and when the mind is enriched with extensive information. It is particularly in the writing of didactic or philosophical dissertations, that cautious gradation in length and difficulty is required. Lest, then, the learners should string confusedly together vague general expressions, the professor, before dismissing them to their tasks, should, in the commencement, give them clear insight into the subject on which they are required to think and to write; he should direct them how to distribute their materials, and should point out the logical connection and unity of design which they ought to observe. If he gradually withdraw his assistance and enter daily into fewer particulars, he will afford them, consistently with their progressive proficiency, greater scope for the exercise of judgment, discrimination, and invention.

Whenever advanced students write original compositions on subjects already treated by good writers (and this they should be frequently induced to do), the professor will assist them in comparing their own performance with that of a standard author. From such comparisons, and from the interest the learners will naturally take in the competition, he will have favourable opportunities to elucidate in an impressive manner what constitutes beauties or defects of style,—suitableness or unsuitableness of the ideas to the subject, completeness or deficiency of matter, and observance or neglect of logical dependence.

In the correction of an exercise, the professor should not himself alter what is defective; he should simply mark the errors and give, at the same time, suitable explanations that the learners may themselves correct them the next day, or a few days after, as already suggested. By effecting the corrections from memory, they are afforded the means of ascertaining what they may have forgotten of the explanations, and what they consequently require to be told again; the deficiency will be supplied by the professor on a second perusal of the uncorrected errors, which, to save time, should be marked by the learners so as to make them be easily noticed. Had these errors been altered at the first inspection, the students would have lost the

opportunity of putting their memory to the test and mentally digesting that which they have heard; they would have remained ignorant of what is far more valuable than the material correction itself—the information elicited by it.

This mode of proceeding holds good in all the branches of instruction in which learners submit their performances to a teacher. The usual practice of effecting at once the needful alterations, although it may answer for learners who are anxious to improve and who are accustomed to reflect, can but little benefit the indolent and listless, who, finding this work done for them, remain indifferent spectators of the operation, and not only gain no information, but are thus encouraged in habits of inattention. If, on the contrary, they have to make the corrections some time after, they will always be under the necessity of attending to the criticisms and explanations of the professor.

Correction by the learner becomes, as it were, a second exercise on the very points in which he was most deficient; and the mental effort he has to make, first, to attend to his teacher's remarks, and afterwards to bring them to recollection, must considerably invigorate his power of attention and assist him in retaining the required information. As he advances in the study of the language, he gradually postpones, for a longer time, correcting the errors which have been pointed out, so that it may always require some reflection to remember what the corrections should be. The effort, thus increased in proportion to his proficiency, always keeps up mental activity.

As original exercises, to be profitable, should be inspected by the professor, they do not answer so well for public as for private teaching, owing to the length of time consumed in their examination, particularly as the correction of each exercise, requiring his attention exclusively, leaves the rest of the class in utter inactivity the longer as the class is larger. Double translation is the only exercise through which the art of writing a foreign idiom can be taught in public instruction. By this process, as by those recommended for acquiring the arts of hearing, pronouncing, and speaking, the practice and progress of individual learners are not interfered with by their class-fellows, however numerous they be. Until, therefore, it be generally introduced in schools and colleges, living languages will continue to be taught as dead languages, that is, without promoting the advancement of learners in writing them,—an evil already adverted to in reference to speaking.

SECT. V.—PREJUDICIAL EFFECTS OF UNRESTRAINED INDULGENCE IN FOREIGN COMPOSITION.

By cultivating acquaintance with a foreign literature through the perusal of its standard authors, we enlarge our views and lessen our prejudices; but, if we use exclusively the language in which it is embodied, we sacrifice our native originality and narrow our minds to the prejudices of another nation. Useful, then, as the arts of speaking and writing a foreign language may be, we would not recommend learners to indulge habitually in its use, or consume much time in endeavouring to reach perfection in these two arts. It is hardly possible to excel as a speaker or a writer in two languages, particularly when they differ much in their genius: the pains which are taken to write the one must necessarily injure the style in the other. Gibbon, Leibnitz, Humboldt, the Schlegels, Goldoni, Manzoni, some Russian writers, and others, not natives of France, have, it is true, composed French works remarkable for purity of diction; but these brilliant exceptions do not invalidate the general rule; they only prove the extensive use of French, which is learned in many countries as a vernacular idiom.*

The author of "Essays on Professional Education"† observes that the difficulty which many young men who have been accounted good scholars find in writing their own language, often arises from their having been exclusively accustomed to the idioms and inversions of Latin, which are not suitable to the English language; girls generally write their own language better and sooner than boys who have devoted five or six years to classical studies, or rather to the making of Latin; and they frequently maintain through life great superiority in epistolary writing, which is the most useful species of composition.

If, then, the comparative study of a second language is, as we have seen, ancillary to more profound knowledge of the principles and genius of the native tongue, the habit of speaking and writing it, when once acquired, is, on the other hand, prejudicial to the practical knowledge of the vernacular. Hence it frequently happens that, after having resided a long time abroad, some persons lose fluency in their own idiom without attaining

* See *Essai sur l'Universalité de la Langue Française*, by C. N. Allou.

† Edgeworth, *Essays on Professional Education*.

complete command of the foreign, and thus become incapable of expressing ideas fluently or correctly in any language. We could name several eminent foreigners who are precisely in that predicament.

Alfieri, unable to shake off the gallicisms of which he had contracted a habit in his travels, left Asti, where French was frequently spoken around him, and went to Tuscany expressly, he says, "to accustom himself to hear, speak, think, and dream in pure Italian."* "I am of opinion" says Jefferson, "there never was an instance of a man's writing or speaking his native tongue with elegance, who passed from fifteen to twenty years out of the country where it is spoken. Thus, no instance exists of a person's writing two languages perfectly."† General Perrone, Minister of War and President of the Council in the kingdom of Sardinia, in 1848, was in the habit of addressing in French the Chamber of Deputies of that country, because, having been for twenty years in the French service, he had, by his own acknowledgment, lost that familiarity with his native idiom (the Italian) which was desirable for treating the great questions then in debate before that assembly.‡ "On my return from England," says Voltaire, "where I had passed nearly two years in constant study of the English language, I found myself embarrassed, when I wished to compose a French tragedy. I had almost accustomed myself to think in English; I felt that the terms of my own language no longer presented themselves to my imagination with the same abundance as before: it was like a stream whose source had been turned off, it cost me time and trouble to make it flow again in its former channel."§ Castell, the erudite author of the "Lexicon Heptaglotton," so completely devoted himself to the Oriental languages that he forgot the orthography of his own.‖

These are striking illustrations of the fact that perfect knowledge of two languages is almost unattainable, and that the practice of writing a foreign idiom, if persevered in for any length of time, must injure the style of the writer in his native tongue.

It is not rare to see among the members of the old English universities, men deeply versed in ancient languages, who are

* *Vita di Vittorio Alfieri da Asti scritta da esso.*

† *Letter to J. Banister, jun.*, 1788. ‡ *Journal des Débats, Oct.* 26, 1848.

§ *Discours sur la Tragédie à Milord Bolingbroke.*

‖ *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century.*—*Percy Anecdotes.*

but inferior orators and writers in their own. This inferiority is even so remarkable as to have drawn on one of the universities of the British Empire the cognomen of the *Silent Sister*. However, all of them may, in this respect, be said to differ only in degree; for the practical English scholars sprung from their most distinguished ranks, are not, either in eminence, or number, proportionate to the Greek and Latin scholars who adorn them and sustain their credit.

At the present day, those who write in a dead language have little chance of being read and less of gaining celebrity by their classical labours. The Latin compositions of Milton, Addison, and Cowley have added little to their fame; the Latin poems of Petrarch are now scarcely known, although he esteemed them above his Italian sonnets and canzones. If Dante had, as he at first intended, written his "Divine Comedy" in Latin, Italy would not boast of him at this day; and his name would have been long since buried in oblivion. The same fate would have befallen Ariosto's poem, if, following Bembo's advice, he had written it in Latin. Who now reads Sannazzaro, Vida, Politian, Bembo, Muretus, the Scotch Buchanan, and other modern Latin authors, whose writings, however, have been acknowledged often to equal those of the ancients in correctness and elegance? The genius of the great writers of a nation is a positive element of its power and greatness; but those who write in a dead language, whatever be the excellence of their performances, add nothing to the glory of their country.

The little leisure that people, in general, have for literary pursuits, would be better employed in endeavouring to advance their knowledge of the native language, and, especially in carrying the two arts of speaking and writing it to their uttermost, than in aiming at excellence in the same acquirements in another language. So difficult is an approach to perfection in these arts, that there is no man who has at his command all the resources of his own idiom, whose style, if minutely examined, would not exhibit flaws. Quintilian* does not find in Cicero the perfect orator; and Cicero† declares that Demosthenes does not fully satisfy him. Far from being complete masters of the vernacular tongue, we are all rather mastered by it, we are carried along in the current of our thoughts by our peculiar stock of words, and the peculiar style to which we have been accustomed; we cannot, in all circumstances, make the language bend to the

* *Instit. Orat.*, Liv. XII. Ch. I. † *De Oratore.*

current of our thoughts and feelings. The great aim of literary education ought then to be, as already stated, the perfect mastery of oral and written expression in the vernacular:—a long period of life devoted to this double object would barely suffice for its accomplishment.

BOOK XII.

CONCLUSION.

"We do amiss to spend seven or eight years in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek as may be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year.—MILTON.*

"Not the man who is most curious in dictionaries and grammars, but he who hears, and speaks, and reads, and writes, most largely, will, in a given time, know the language best."—J. S. BLACKIE. †

CHAPTER I.

TIME REQUIRED FOR LEARNING A LANGUAGE.

SECT. I.—OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF A LIVING LANGUAGE, AND TIME REQUIRED FOR IT.

IT is often asked, "In what time can a foreign language be learned?" To this question no definite answer can be given. The more or less attention, energy, and assiduity of the learner, his understanding and power of memory, his age, previous knowledge, habits of study, the assistance he receives from a teacher, the time he devotes daily to the study, and many other circumstances have all necessarily great influence in the result.

It is obvious that a person, for example, who studies six hours a day, is likely, every thing else being equal, to advance six times faster than one who reads but one hour. If a diligent learner wishes merely to understand the language as he reads or hears it, he may fully accomplish this object in ten or twelve

* *On Education, to Sam Hartlib.*

† *On the Studying and Teaching of Languages.*

months ; for, within that time, by strictly following our directions, a series of about twenty volumes duodecimo, progressively increasing in difficulty, may be read, and two or three hundred pages may be heard, which is the minimum of practice requisite for the complete possession of these two acquirements.

But the circle of practice and exertion must be greatly widened, if a learner aim at something beyond mere power of understanding the written language—at that critical knowledge which confers ability to enter into the spirit of foreign compositions, discern their literary merit, and detect their faults. Fifty standard volumes, read twice over, would scarcely suffice to enable even a person of cultivated mind to perceive beauties of style in foreign authors, as he would those of his national writers. How many excellences are imperceptible to an inexperienced reader ! how many defects escape his observation ! how many delicate shades of thought and expression are lost to him ! Nothing but constant practice in reading the best works, and reflecting on them, can give that familiarity with their style which permits taste and judgment to be exercised in forming an opinion of their merit. How few, even among the well-educated, can truly appreciate the beauties of their best national writers!

Far more difficult still is it to speak or write a foreign language, than to understand it when spoken or written. Many acquirements, which are not requisite for comprehending a language, are indispensable for the expression of thought. Not only a large number of words, with their various acceptations, pronunciation, and orthography, syntactical and idiomatical structure, but, what is far more important, ideas worth being communicated are among the essential elements of good speaking and good writing. We must possess considerable information to be able to join in general conversation and in discussion on numberless subjects which engage attention in social and active life. In fact, to know a language thoroughly implies acquaintance with the different departments of human knowledge; for how can its scientific and technical terms be introduced in speaking or writing, unless the sciences and arts to which they belong be known ?

If a student's ambition is to speak and write with fluency, correctness, and elegance, the period of his study has no limit. In these two arts, in the foreign as in the native language, he can never reach perfection. His improvement in them may be

advancing during his life: it depends on the society he mixes with, the books he reads, and the opportunities he has of practising the language in its four departments. Many persons may be found who fully understand several languages, that is, can comprehend works written in them or people speaking them; few there are who know even two perfectly and who speak or write them with equal facility and correctness. Lord Chesterfield little reflected on what constitutes perfect knowledge of a language, when he insisted on his son's "speaking all the modern languages as purely and correctly as the natives of the respective countries."*

To learn a living language is to learn four distinct arts: it is obvious then that much practice is required for its complete acquisition. Moreover, the labour of recollecting and applying the elements of these arts—words and phrases—is much increased by the diversity of ideas attached to the great majority of expressions; for it is nearly as difficult to retain the different meanings of a term as it would be to retain as many terms having each a distinct signification. All this cannot be accomplished without a considerable portion of time, whatever be the boast of certain persons who pretend to teach all the departments of a language in a few months—nay, in a few lessons. As a striking proof of the difficulty of its complete acquisition, we may again remark that very few persons reach eminence in all the branches even of their own, notwithstanding their constant practice. Yet, parents, impressed with the unfounded notion that modern languages ought to be learned more expeditiously than Latin, do not always allow their children to devote to them as much time as their proper study demands. Nothing is so common, particularly among female learners, as to give to the study of a living language only the same and sometimes not half the time which they lavish on instrumental music.

The absurdity of this apportionment of time, which is in direct opposition to the relative importance of the acquirements, is rendered more obvious when we consider the nature of the difficulties to be overcome for their attainment. Skill on the piano consists in having that command of the notes which enables the performer to play at sight, that is, to execute without preparation or hesitation any given piece of music. These notes amount to about eighty, which, admitting of six different durations, make four hundred and eighty, say five

* *Letters to his Son.* Let. 152.

hundred musical elements at most, of which ready command is to be gained. Now the elements or vocables of a language, French, for example, are a hundred times that number; and, if we suppose even half the vocabulary to be composed of terms little required in ordinary life, there will still remain twenty-five thousand indispensable articulate and as many alphabetical words to be gained by the learner, and used by him without preparation or hesitation, not in one uniform way, as the few musical notes, but in various ways, according as the language is read, heard, spoken, or written. The disproportion in the comparative difficulties of these two acquirements is found again considerably augmented, when it is considered that the greater number of these twenty-five thousand words, different from the five hundred unchangeable musical notes, admit of various shades of meaning, undergo diverse inflections, and are subjected, in their relations and arrangements, to numerous syntactical rules and to still more numerous exceptional and idiomatical forms. Moreover, their infinite combinations, varying unceasingly with the unceasing activity of the mind, and the endless relations of social intercourse, require their possessor to be both a ready performer and composer—a double office far more difficult than the mere digital dexterity aimed at by the pianist. It is most surprising how any one could, for a moment, imagine that a musical instrument demands more time than a foreign language; and yet this most prejudicial error is very prevalent!

However, although the precise time required for learning a language cannot be definitely specified, we may venture to say, that, with earnest, steady, and well directed effort, a person of common abilities and diligent habits has it in his power to gain, in two years and a half or three years, complete possession of the first two branches of a living language, with that moderate skill in the other two which may serve the purposes of ordinary social intercourse. This applies to learners over twelve or thirteen years old: under that age the time of learning should be longer, in proportion as the child is younger.

When one foreign language is acquired, the study of a second demands much less time, as it presents great facilities, comparatively with the first. Independently of the analogy which may exist between the new language and the two already known, —the native and the foreign,—the notions of general grammar, which have necessarily been acquired in learning one, and the

mental habits formed by that study, will considerably assist in the acquisition of a second or a third. In fact, the more languages we know the greater is the facility of learning a new one; but, as a sad drawback, the more languages we learn the less chance have we of reaching perfection in any.

SECT. II.—OF THE SIMULTANEOUS STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE OF SEVERAL LANGUAGES.

If two foreign tongues be learned together, the time of daily study must be proportionably increased; but we doubt that this plan is advisable. It is contrary to one of our principles of instruction,—*one thing at a time.* In infancy two languages may be practically acquired together without confusion, because a child, hearing the words of each, always combined into phrases and directly associated with the ideas, instinctively, and without the aid of rules, reproduces these words incorporated into their respective phraseology, whenever he has the same ideas to express: he repeats them, in fact, in the connected way in which they have, by repetition, been impressed on his mind.

The case is different in the comparative method, that is, when foreign languages are learned through books; for the meaning of words is then mostly ascertained through other words, and detached from the phraseology. A beginner would be apt to confound the two idioms: and his perplexity would increase with their resemblance. As he acquires new words and new principles in either, he is, after a short time, at a loss to know to which language they belong. He will sometimes apply to one, the sounds, accentuation, orthography, and principles of the other; and, when the corresponding terms differ only by one or two letters, the confusion between them will be considerably increased. "The French, Spanish, and Italian," says Jefferson, "being degenerated dialects of the Latin, are apt to mix in conversation. I have never seen a person speaking the three languages, who did not mix them."*

The objection to this course, however, will be greatly lessened if the learner begin this double study at an age when he can bring powers of abstraction to bear on it. The peculiar form of the alphabetical characters of some languages, as of German and Greek, would also diminish the chances of confusion, when one of these is learned conjointly with another. If attention

* *Letter to P. Carr.* Aug. 1787.

were exclusively directed to reading, the simultaneous acquisition of several languages not only could be effected without confusion, but would be most favourable to the study of comparative grammar and to all philological investigations.

The difficulties presented by the arts of speaking and writing a foreign language, of which the recollection of an immense number of words is the least; and the considerable time, practice, and ability required for their complete possession, sufficiently prove the impossibility of knowing several languages perfectly. It is most improbable that the Mithridates, the Cleopatras, the Pico della Mirandoles, the Crichtons, could have possessed the complete command of many languages which they are said to have; that they, in fact, could have spoken or written them with any degree of facility or accuracy approaching to that which they possessed in their own. The power of understanding twenty or more languages is undoubtedly within the mental reach of an industrious student; but, we repeat it, the power of using even only two foreign idioms with perfect ease and correctness in the expression of thought, for the purposes of intellectual communication in all circumstances of social intercourse, is almost beyond attainment. Several languages may be learned in succession, and each be tolerably well known at some period, yet the want of practice in some of them must soon do away with the facility and correctness with which they were at first spoken or written.

There is more danger of overrating the attainments of people in a foreign language than in any other pursuit; because readiness in translating or speaking a few phrases, apparently implying general ability to translate or converse, obtains for them the credit of knowing the language, especially from those who do not understand it. The general ignorance of what constitutes thorough knowledge of a foreign idiom, the impossibility of ascertaining how far persons think in it, the absence of opportunities to test their powers in serious as well as in familiar discourse, are all obstacles to the formation of a correct opinion on this point: hence the fallacious foundation on which rests the reputation of some linguists, whose command of languages is but too often confined to a few familiar topics of conversation; hence many scholars pass for thorough masters of Greek and Latin, who can only translate them; hence the great number of governesses who are supposed to know the living languages they profess to teach, and of which they barely understand the

rudiments; hence also the exultation of the fond parent who proclaims his child a proficient in a language of which he parrots a few hackneyed phrases. Such mistaken notions would not be so prevalent, if people would test the difficulty of the acquirement in the way in which they can best judge, that is, by ascertaining how far any foreigner residing among them has succeeded in speaking their language. The failure which is generally experienced in mastering the pronunciation, accent, and idiom of a strange language, even after long residence in the country where it is spoken, fully corroborates our observations.

We are very much inclined to distrust the pretensions of those who profess to teach to speak and write several living languages. They may have gained, through diligent study of grammatical treatises, acquaintance with the general structure of different languages; but it is impossible that they could have mastered the pronunciation and accent, and the immense amount of words and idioms required for the expression of thought in all the concerns of life. This acquisition demands more extensive practice and intercourse with persons speaking those languages, than could, in ordinary circumstances, have fallen to their lot. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew may be taught by one individual, because their pronunciation presents little difficulty, and reading the works written in them is all that is required; but we do not believe that, among teachers of living languages, there are two in a hundred who know two languages, beside their own, sufficiently well to have it in their power to impart complete knowledge of them. Yet, such is the extreme inconsistency of people on this subject, that, in schools and colleges, the office of teaching Greek and Latin, or rather of teaching to translate some portions of a few Greek and Latin volumes, is commonly entrusted to different persons, while one professor is not unfrequently expected to teach *to read, to hear, to speak,* and *to write two* or *three* living languages, and all that often for a lower salary than is given to either a Latin or a Greek professor. *

* A striking example of this depreciation of the modern languages and of those who teach them, has lately been given in Ireland: at the examination for degrees in the Queen's University, held in Dublin (September, 1852), the Greek and Latin Examiners received each 100*l.* for their services, whereas only 40*l.* were given to the examiner in Modern Languages—the professor who examined in History and English Literature fared no better.

SECT. III.—TIME REQUIRED FOR LEARNING LATIN AND GREEK.

Let us now inquire what time is requisite for gaining critical knowledge of the ancient languages, exclusive of the arts of speaking and writing them. Although really less useful in after-life, and comprising fewer objects to be attained than the modern, yet, as it is probable that they will long retain the privilege of preparing our youth for the learned professions and the higher stations in society, more time may be devoted to them than a barely practical knowledge of them would require. If the aim of classical learning be merely to understand the ancient writers, this can be fully accomplished in one year, or two at the utmost; but, as that instruction is usually intended to serve as an instrument for raising the intellectual character of the student, forming his taste in literary matters, and improving him in his native tongue, its period may be extended to three years. And not only can he, within this period, be made to understand the classics thoroughly; but the profound thoughts and noble sentiments which abound in them may be rendered familiar to him, their beauties and excellences minutely pointed out and explained, and means afforded him of imitating them, and transfusing into his own language what they possess worthy of imitation.

This period of classical study has, before now, been deemed sufficient by many eminent men, beside those whose opinions we have already recorded. The decree of the French National Convention of the 19th December, 1793, enacted, "There will be six classes for the study of the Latin language. Scholars of ordinary talent and application will go through two classes in a year, so that, at the end of the third year, they may have accomplished their course of Latinity." We need scarcely observe, that these limits are exclusive of the use which may, thenceforward, be made of the practical knowledge thus gained of the ancient languages, as auxiliaries to literary, philosophical, or professional studies.

After the age of twelve, the time of young persons may be divided daily into three equal portions: one for sleep, another for meals and physical exercise, and the third for study. Eight hours a day of serious application are, during the third period of youth, sufficient for all the purposes of intellectual education,

although, in many schools, more time is devoted, not unfrequently, to the exclusive study of the dead languages. These eight hours may be equally divided between literary and scientific pursuits. Three years, at the rate of about three hours a day of earnest application by himself and six hours a week of lessons with a professor, would fully suffice to a diligent learner of thirteen, to accomplish the classical course, comprising Greek and Latin, without interfering with the other intellectual pursuits which ought to form part of a liberal education. These languages are attended with more profit when studied simultaneously with the sciences; because the meaning of words is then elicited by better acquaintance with the things of which they are the signs, and scientific nomenclatures are explained by reference to the classical sources from which they are derived.

We fix these limits for the classical course, that it may be terminated before commencing professional education; but these will not be sufficient, if both be conducted simultaneously. The various studies which would then claim the attention of the learner, would not allow him to take from them four hours daily: less time would have to be allotted to Latin and Greek,—the period of learning them becoming proportionably longer. If Latin alone be learned (and it is fully adequate for securing all the collateral benefits now proposed from ancient literature), the classical course might still be extended over five or six years,—devoting to it one hour every day in private study, and three hours a week with a teacher. In our subsequent observations, however, we will advert to a three years' course, leaving those who make the study embrace a longer period to modify our suggestions accordingly.

Although there is less inconvenience in learning together Greek and Latin, these being only read, than there would be in learning two living languages, yet, as the divided attention of the learner would not probably permit him, consistently with the time claimed by other studies, to follow all the directions given in the Book on Reading, the learning of Greek, if enforced, may perhaps be postponed until entering the second year, when the principal difficulties presented by the reading of Latin have disappeared. Two years' study of Greek would then suffice, as that language is not so difficult, nor its literature so extensive, as the Latin.

SECT IV.—OF GREEK BEING LEARNED THROUGH LATIN.

Greek, at whatever time it is commenced, should be learned through the native tongue, rather than through the Latin. A foreign language can be studied through another foreign language only when the latter is sufficiently familiar to the learner to be made a direct vehicle of ideas, and the medium of communication between him and his instructor,—a degree of proficiency now seldom attained by modern Latin students,—then the resemblance between the two idioms, which, in the simultaneous study of them, would have been a cause of confusion, renders one an auxiliary to the other.

The practice of explaining the Greek classics through Latin, which formerly prevailed, when that language was a common vehicle of thought among the learned, and when the modern dialects were as yet too imperfect to interpret the Greek, is now very generally and deservedly growing into disuse. One of its most baneful effects is to debar learners from the means of improvement in their native tongue, to which translation is so conducive. Improvement in Latin has also been alleged as a motive for making it the medium of learning Greek; but it is not justified by utility; for this course only teaches the art of composition in the language which is used as a medium, and this is not required in Latin. This method, to which our ancestors were driven, has now nothing to recommend it, for there is not between the two languages that resemblance which would facilitate the learning of one by the other. Greek, although bearing some affinity to Latin, has, in its syntactical arrangement, more conformity with French and English. Besides, having become again a living language, it should, as such, be learned through the native idiom. If one of the two must be learned through the other, Greek ought to be made the medium for learning Latin, because it is easier, and, as a living tongue, it may be useful in after-life as a vehicle of intellectual communication.

The languages of modern Europe, which are adequate to the expression of thought in a high state of civilisation, offer to the learners, whose national idioms they are, greater facilities for translation than an ancient tongue which they but imperfectly know. The use of Latin as an interpreter of Greek is fallacious and circuitous; for, in general, the learner not only cannot render by it the force and beauty of his original, but, in most

cases, his incorrect and uncouth Latin does not even permit him to come clearly at the ideas: these are to him distorted and confused, because he sees them through a distorting medium: unable to arrive at the unknown through the unknown, he is often compelled to apply, as a last resource, to the native words, which alone are identified in his mind with the ideas, and which alone can convey them to him accurately and perspicuously. Thus he loses considerable time in overcoming unnecessary difficulties,—in looking for interpretations of interpretations in his Greek and Latin lexicon. Latin is an obstacle against, rather than an assistance towards, understanding the Greek text; it impedes rapidity of conception, and renders the author's meaning unintelligible to the learner. The use of it is one of the greatest obstacles to the knowledge of Greek, and the source of the misery which often accompanies that study; it is perhaps, also, the chief cause why it is so much neglected. "I cannot," says Coleridge, "but lament the inveterate practice of learning Greek after and by means of Latin,—a practice so injurious to a vivid and exact apprehension of the former language, that nothing but the want of a competent Anglo-Greek lexicon and grammar can excuse the continuance of it in any school." *

We would observe here, that annotations which are intended to explain either the Greek or the Latin classics, ought always to be given in the native tongue of the students, as presenting greater clearness and precision—the essential requisites in all explanations. They would thus be oftener consulted, and better understood, whilst the taste of learners would run no risk of being injured by the unclassical Latin in which they are frequently written.

SECT. V.—PROGRESSIVE ORDER OF CLASSICAL STUDIES.

We will now state the order in which learners may proceed in the study of Latin, and a similar course may be adopted for the Greek, when learned as a dead language.

Acquaintance with a large stock of words being the first requisite to understand Latin authors, the study of them forms the occupation of the first year. The chief exercise of this period, consequently, consists in oral and written translation of easy prose works—the initiatory books which we have denominated "reading vocabularies." The interpretations and

* *Introduction to the Study of the Greek Classic Poets.*

explanations attached to the foreign text of these initiatory books, combined with the assistance of a professor or a monitor, and with careful study of the declensions and conjugations, as also of the words of the Second Class, will enable a learner to familiarise himself within that year with the words and phraseology of about eight or ten small volumes. The extent of reading must, for the first year, be more limited in the ancient languages than in the modern, because their transpositive construction makes this branch more difficult to be acquired; the works also to be read, being generally of a higher standard or more serious cast, demand more care and time for translation, than the juvenile modern works which may be put in the hands of beginners.

We have, in Book VIII., Chap. I., Sect. II., mentioned some of the elementary works which appear best calculated for introducing beginners to the translation of Latin, and familiarising them with its words. To these may be added the easiest classics, such as *Eutropius*, *Phædrus*, *Aurelius Victor*, *Justin*, *Cornelius Nepos*:—forming, in all, ten or twelve introductory volumes, which may be had with literal and free translations accompanying the text. They may be read in the following progression, one within the first three months, two within the second, three during the third, and four during the last quarter of the year, or the first six volumes a second or third time over. These historical volumes and the classics which will be subsequently read, will become more interesting, be more clearly understood, and their subject better remembered, if, in accordance with our suggestion, learners pursue simultaneously with them a similar course of study in their national writers.

The extensive reading which we presume may be accomplished within the first year, although contrasting strangely with the extreme slowness of the ordinary method, will not be found exaggerated, when it is considered that the student does not, as in the common routine, waste time in frequent applications to the dictionary, in learning grammar and passages of authors, or in writing exercises. His progress in translation is also forwarded by the teacher being thus enabled to devote more time to the explanation of the verbal and phraseological difficulties of the Latin authors. Besides, the books being better adapted to his capacity, by reason of the age at which he begins, and of the explanations attached to them, he can read them with more interest, diligence, and profit. We have known many persons, especially young girls from thirteen to sixteen years of age, who,

in their study of French, have, through diligence and by an insensible gradation of difficulties from juvenile prose to standard poetical works, accomplished in one year the reading of above twenty volumes in that language. Will it then be affirmed that boys of the same age cannot read ten small volumes of easy Latin within the same period?

In the second year, books with interlineal or marginal interpretations must be dispensed with. The extensive vocabulary of words with which the first year's reading has familiarised the learner gives him great facility in discovering from the context the meaning of new words; however, to remove doubts, he may now use a dictionary, or, to save time, apply to a correct translation of the original, if he have not the advantage of a living assistant. His version from the classics ought to be less literal than in the preceding year; for he proposes, at this second stage, not so much to ascertain the value of words as to enter into the spirit of the author's ideas and style. This double object can be best effected by free and correct translation,—translation of ideas rather than of words, which will at the same time exhibit the difference of genius between the two languages.

The eight or ten volumes translated in the first year, will enable the learner to read, within the second, the principal historians, consisting of twelve or fifteen volumes duodecimo, including some of those which he has already read. Concurrently with this practical course, he must direct attention to the study of grammar. Its rules will be constantly illustrated by verbal and syntactical analysis of the classical text and reciprocal reference of the grammar to it. Double translation, which should also make part of this second year's instruction, will afford further opportunity to elicit and apply the principles of the two languages. The professor, in explaining the authors, will direct the attention of his pupils to the elements of good style in both the Latin and the native tongue.

The third year is to be devoted to the mental reading of the orators, philosophers, and poets. No standard classic should, if possible, be neglected; for the ever-varying transposition of Latin words, generating great diversity of style among its writers, makes it imperative to extend the circle of reading, in order to surmount all the difficulties presented in its literature. But, as the number of Latin classics is very limited, some of them may be read several times over, especially those which are most congenial to the tastes or suited to the future avocations of students.

In this year also, the works which hold the highest rank among the classics, should be analysed by the professor, and commented upon in reference to style and thought, whilst his pupils, the better to perceive their beauties and appreciate their merits, concurrently study grammar, prosody, synonymy, rhetoric, logic, and the different branches of literary criticism. Students, especially those who are destined to run the career of classical tuition, or whose taste inclines them to philological pursuits, must turn serious attention to the science of language, and be frequently exercised in grammatical, rhetorical, and logical analysis.

Double translation should be continued, and turning back into Latin a standard translation of one of the classics should then be commenced by those who are ambitious of emulating the writers of antiquity. But, the attention of the student should be particularly directed to translating and imitating them. In the first and second year, he aimed at gaining a knowledge of the language; in the third, he should render that knowledge subservient to the highest intellectual acquisitions: he should endeavour to transfuse into the native tongue and appropriate all the beauties of the ancient writers; thereby quickening and purifying his taste till the acquisition of a copious stock of select language ensures him the finished style of a scholar. Latin is perhaps a fitter instrument for practising vernacular composition through the exercise of translation, than most modern languages, by reason of its transpositive collocation, which considerably adds to the difficulty of that exercise, and assimilates translation more to original composition.

Thus a youth, at the age of sixteen, after a three years' course, and without having neglected other studies, will have gained an extensive and critical knowledge of Latin or Greek, and have laid in a large stock of invaluable materials gathered from the choicest fields of literature. Just habits will be formed, and the great aims of a student's life appreciated. No painful or puerile recollection being associated with the best productions of antiquity rendered familiar by practice, he will feel no disinclination at any time to resort to them, in order to keep up his classical knowledge, or to make them subservient to further improvement in the native tongue. But another great advantage resulting from this economy of time, is that, not encroaching on other branches of instruction, Latin may be studied by any young person anxious to embrace an extensive range of information,

and as yet undecided respecting his future vocation. The consequent saving of expense also brings classical learning within the reach of a greater number of persons than the old system, which renders it accessible only to the wealthy.

The practical knowledge of Latin, thus completed at sixteen, far from being thenceforward neglected or forgotten, may be used as an auxiliary in professional education, which ought to commence at this age. Literary and scientific pursuits may derive from it considerable benefit, while the classical masterpieces, by proper analysis, translation, and imitation, will ensure thorough knowledge of grammar, rhetoric, and oratory, and thus serve as the most efficient means of advancement in all literary pursuits; other valuable Latin works in various departments of literature and science, now only known by name, and a great number of which have never been translated, may be read with profit by those who aspire to eminence in the learned professions. Linguistical should always be combined with professional studies, whenever practicable.

We have not included, in this summary of a classical course, original prose or poetical composition, although they are not forgotten in the Book on Writing; because, in our opinion, these acquirements are not useful either immediately as a mental exercise, or remotely as likely to be of advantage in after-life, except, perhaps, to the Catholic clergy, and to those who make it their profession to teach the ancient languages. Classical teachers, who cannot, indeed, be too deeply versed in Latin and Greek, ought to prepare for their office by a systematical course of composition in those languages; but it is preposterous to require of boys destined for any other profession, including even those denominated the learned, in which the power of composing in a dead language cannot be of any use whatever, to devote to its acquisition considerable time and labour, and all this, as R. L. Edgeworth remarks, to acquire empty honours at college, and to comply with long-established routine and prejudice. *

SECT. VI.—DEGREE OF USEFULNESS OF A TEACHER.

If a good method is necessary to advance with certainty and rapidity in the acquisition of a foreign language, the assistance afforded by a judicious, well-informed instructor, is not less

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necessary for its complete attainment. When thoroughly versed in the language of his young pupils, as may be expected in a classical teacher, he can efficiently assist them in translation; and although, in this respect, his services may not be equally required by adults, they will prove useful in enabling them to investigate doubtful points, advance more rapidly, and discern beauties and defects of style, which would have escaped them in solitary study. With a literary critic and refined scholar for a teacher, accuracy is acquired, taste formed, and depth of information ensured.

The improvement of learners in the second branch entirely depends on the teacher: it requires good management, correct pronunciation, and ability to read well, to perfect learners in hearing and pronouncing the foreign language. Acquisition of the third branch is equally dependent on him; he must have great command of the two languages to conduct the exercises in phrase-making. He should be well informed, to induce his pupils to speak, by conversing with them on their favourite subjects, or their various pursuits: he should, indeed, be a man of universal information. To be able, for example, efficiently to assist advanced students in acquiring facility of expression in history, politics, natural philosophy, the fine arts, he should be skilled in these different departments of knowledge. Finally, to forward young persons in the fourth branch, he should be a thorough grammarian and a good writer in the foreign language, as well as in the native idiom of his pupils, so far as this double acquisition is possible; for, on inspecting their translation into either tongue, or any other composition, he should not allow the most trifling error to pass uncorrected, lest they be confirmed in bad habits; and he should support by a grammatical rule every correction which he indicates.

The importance of the teacher's services varies with the language and the learner's degree of proficiency. The study of modern languages embracing among its objects the art of conversation, which is not aimed at in the ancient, requires that pupils be more frequently with their instructor; for it is through his exertions they can acquire the power of understanding the spoken foreign language, of pronouncing and speaking it. An adult may, with proper explanatory books, dispense altogether with a teacher, when the art of reading is alone aimed at, as is especially the case with Latin: the celebrated scholars, Scaliger, Cujacius, Muretus, and Ramus, were, among many others, self-

taught. But no one can, by any method, or with any written explanation whatever, learn by himself to understand a foreign language when spoken, or to speak it correctly.

If the study of Latin and Greek be restricted to the really useful, three hours a week devoted by a professor to a class of twelve, will suffice, through the course, for enabling them to master either language, provided these students be desirous of improvement, and capable of self-direction. But with children too young to be either inclined or able to study by themselves, there is no assignable limit to the time he should devote to them.

However, the advantages to be derived from a teacher's services are commensurate not so much with the length and frequency of his lessons as with the usefulness of the occupations in which he is engaged with his pupils. He should scrupulously refrain from those exercises which have been shown either not to require his aid or not to conduce to the ends proposed. In modern languages the frequency of his attendance ought to increase proportionably with the advancement of learners; for the preparatory work of gaining familiarity with words and collecting materials of expression, depends chiefly on their own diligence, and scarcely needs his assistance; whereas the subsequent application of these to conversation and composition can be effected only under his guidance. When they are beginning to converse and write with some fluency, they cannot be too frequently in his society, if they wish to attain skill in these two arts.

Whatever be the language or the branch in which the instructor is engaged with his pupils, he should always keep in mind that the efficacy of teaching does not depend so much on the extent of the knowledge which he possesses as upon his power of communicating it, of commanding attention, of imparting interest to study, and of bringing all the moral and mental faculties to bear on the pursuit. His efforts, above all, should tend to make self-teachers of his pupils: and the more he has made them independent of him, the more successfully and the more nobly will he have accomplished his task. Patience, cheerfulness, and affectionate words will effect these objects more certainly than magisterial gravity or unbending severity.

Long after the period of education such an instructor would continue to be the friend and best adviser of his pupils. If the unjust and unreasonable depreciation in which people hold the

intellectual benefactors of their children did not early inspire youth with disrespect and ingratitude for those to whom they owe what is to them far more valuable than life itself—a good education,—we should, oftener than we do, see the pupils consider as the friends of their manhood those who have been the instructors of their youth; and the intimacy arising between the man of letters or of science and the man of the world or of business, would be an abundant source of advantage to both and to society at large.

SECT. VII.—ON KEEPING UP THE KNOWLEDGE OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.

Social intercourse with a professor would enable a learner to keep up, and even extend beyond the limits of the educational period, the practical knowledge of the living language once acquired. It is therefore desirable that the professor be always a welcome and respected visitor in the families of his pupils: if he is not worthy of civility and attention, he has no right to be employed as a teacher. The proficient in a living language should avail himself of every opportunity to practise it; he should endeavour to preserve it through life by mental and oral reading, as well as by conversation, whenever circumstances permit. The mental discipline, cultivation of taste, and improvement in the native tongue, which are earned by proper study of the ancient languages, may be considered as an equivalent for the time, trouble, and expense devoted to that study: even though, at the termination of the collegiate course, Greek and Latin be laid aside and forgotten, the intellectual benefits arising from the comparative method will be enjoyed through life. Living languages not conferring usually these benefits, owing to the foreign teachers' imperfect knowledge of the language of their pupils, should be learned for their utility as sources of information and channels of communication, while the mental discipline which they may equally promote should not be neglected, whenever the acquirements of the teacher and the age of the pupil render it practicable.

When, especially, the art of reading is once attained, that is, when the learner can read the foreign language mentally and with nearly the same ease and pleasure as his own, its practice should be persevered in: first, to derive from it the instruction or mental enjoyment expected from its possession; secondly, to add more

and more to his stock of the materials required for speaking and writing; lastly, to prevent forgetting the language. We would forget even our own, if we did not often repeat, or hear repeated, its words and phraseology. The power of retaining an art once possessed depends not on the degree of skill attained in it, but on the habits formed by long continuance in the practice. In the possession of a language especially, he who does not advance retrogrades: each day brings losses which demand to be compensated by new acquisitions; we begin to forget from the moment we cease to learn.

It is then no cause for wonder that Latin and Greek are so soon forgotten. During the whole scholastic period only portions of classics are read, the aggregate amount of which would scarcely make a dozen volumes. Moreover, after leaving school, people seldom keep up the practice of those languages, partly, because they associate with them only disagreeable recollections, partly, also, because they do not read them with sufficient ease to take pleasure in the practice; but, particularly, because, beyond the scholastic classics, ancient works are rare, from which to derive amusement or instruction. Besides, the opportunity is never afforded of practising them in conversation, as frequently is the case with the living languages.

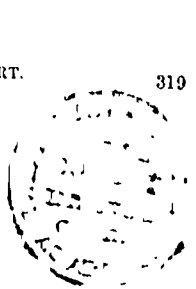
People should turn to account in manhood what they have learned in childhood: it is the business of parents and instructors to direct the attention of young persons only to what is useful. It is irrational to neglect a language which has been once acquired, and more irrational still for an adult to learn one, or for a parent to impose it on his child, merely because it may be a fashionable acquirement. Fashion should never enter, as a motive of study, in the education of youth; and yet many of those who learn languages have no other.

German, for which there has been of late so great a demand in this country, owes much of its popularity to this spurious source, rather than to its intrinsic value, or the richness of its literature. We can easily conceive that matrimonial alliances in the Royal Family with German princes may render the German language both useful and agreeable to persons in high life, who approach those princes, who travel abroad, or who have the means of purchasing and leisure for reading German works; but we do not understand why people should learn it, as often occurs, through mere fashion, and without the expectation of useful results. They, indeed, deserve to be ridiculed, if not severely

censured, who waste time in learning a foreign language without any intention of visiting the country where it is spoken, or the probability of meeting people with whom to converse; without having either the means or the desire of procuring works in that language beyond the school books indispensable for its acquisition. It is obvious that the little which is thus acquired cannot be long retained. What would be said of the folly of acquiring skill on a musical instrument with the intention of never performing?

It is equally absurd to imagine that young people can derive mental improvement or practical benefit of any kind from mere rudiments of Latin or any other language, and, under that impression, to confine them to the first elements of classical instruction, as is often the case with boys not destined for a learned profession. The first steps in the arts are more mechanical than intellectual: in the study of a foreign language, learning declensions and conjugations, searching for words in a dictionary, parsing, construing, translating literally, and writing elementary exercises, are all more irksome than profitable to the mind. Yet, almost exclusively to these minor occupations, the attention of learners is long confined before they can enter into communion with the standard writers, and many leave school without deriving any benefit whatever from their classical studies.

Advantages of a really intellectual character arising from the study of a foreign language, cannot be obtained until many volumes have been read and great proficiency has been gained. That the higher powers of the mind may be efficiently exercised and talent for composition in the native tongue improved, students should, by great familiarity with the foreign phraseology, be trained to embrace the thought simultaneously with its expression, to infer the laws of language by induction and generalisation, to compare the genius of the foreign and the native language, and, finally, to enter into the spirit of a foreign author and appreciate the beauties of his style. It is only at a very advanced stage that the elegance, force, and harmony of ancient writers can be properly felt, that the intellectual faculties can, from analysis of their style and contemplation of their thoughts, be invigorated, and that the reading of their works can be made a means of relaxation and a source of delight through life.



CHAPTER II.

RECAPITULATION.

SECT. I.—SUMMARY OF THE FIRST PART.

HAVING pointed out the different objects of the study of language, the various exercises which lead to the attainment of each, and the advantages arising from them, we will now briefly recapitulate the characteristic features of the method we recommend.

After having divided Education into its natural branches—physical, moral, and intellectual,—we entered minutely into the development of intellectual education, because it is more immediately the design of this Essay. The distinction between *Education* and *Instruction* has been sufficiently established by our classification to prevent these words from being confounded one with the other.

Although in our psychological classification we deviated in some points from the beaten path, we, nevertheless, recognised the same fundamental principles and arrived at the same conclusion as the most eminent among modern philosophers, in reference to education, namely, that, as man is endowed with a diversity of innate powers, given him for a wise purpose, and differing in energy in each individual, it is the duty of the educator to study the human constitution and to cultivate all these powers in the child entrusted to his care.

The usefulness of linguistical studies relatively to the other branches of instruction, has, by an exposition of the various departments of human knowledge, been exhibited so as to show the fallacy of making the dead languages engross exclusively the period of education. The necessity of shortening the time usually devoted to those studies, has been rendered still more obvious by an inquiry into the abuses of the old scholastic course, which neglects much useful information for

the exclusive acquisition of languages, the knowledge of which can, at best, be but very incomplete and of but little application through life.

The unreasonable length of time usually devoted to classical studies and their unsatisfactory results have been shown to arise from various causes, which we have endeavoured to obviate. Among these may be mentioned, as the principal, 1. the early age at which Latin is commonly learned; 2. neglect of a preparatory moral and intellectual training; 3. deviation from nature in the methods of instruction; 4. preference given to precept over example and to theory over practice; 5. absence of classification in the objects proposed from linguistical studies; 6. want of consistency between the end and the means; 7. pursuit of useless incidental acquirements; 8. the tedious and unintellectual practice of written exercises at an early stage of the study; 9. untimely use of grammars and dictionaries; 10. recourse to mechanical memory, to the prejudice of the higher faculties; 11. the narrow limits of classical reading during the course; 12. disregard of the theory and practice of the native tongue.

The degree of utility of different languages has been ascertained; and it has been shown that Greek and Latin are the fittest for disciplining the mind and improving learners in the mother tongue; that Oriental languages best suit the views of philologists and explorers of antiquity, and that modern European idioms offer the richest stores of knowledge and the most extensive means of social communication. For living languages, and, especially for the national tongue, we have claimed a pre-eminence too long denied them. Our remarks on these points will, we are persuaded, be responded to by public opinion, which loudly calls for educational reform and intellectual emancipation.

As a preliminary step towards the reforms proposed, we have shown the necessity of improving the method of instruction, of raising in public estimation the office of the teacher, and of enlightening parents on the subject of education. In our exposition of a rational method, laws have been laid down, which we presume will be found based on the strictest principles of mental philosophy. The duties of parents and teachers have been dwelt upon at some length, because it is of the highest importance that the influence of the former over the moral training of the young, and that of the latter over their mental discipline, be rightly exercised. Our vindication of the character of the educator will

not, we hope, be deemed supererogatory, when it is considered that a high standard of education can never be attained, unless his noble profession be honoured and respected.

It has been seen that, as the comparative process of learning foreign languages through books, cannot properly commence before the age of twelve, the first two periods of youth are best employed in educating the heart, cultivating the faculties, studying nature, and acquiring the vernacular tongue. This tongue has been made the stepping-stone to the comparative study of foreign languages; and, thereby, has the child been led to an acquaintance with words through the varied and pleasing contemplation of things; for the interest which he is afterwards to take in the study of words, will be in proportion to that which he feels in the consideration of the things themselves. The conversations on objects, which have been suggested with that view, are in accordance with the constitution of the mind and the natural progress of its development. They initiate a child into the elements of science, while they give him practical knowledge of the native tongue. They may truly be called the gymnastics of the senses and of the mind.

Among the many benefits expected from them the following may be mentioned:

1. They give to the sensitive and the intellectual faculties justness, vigour, rapidity, and penetration, by means of numerous exercises which are as interesting as they are instructive.

2. They create habits of attention, observation, reflection, and investigation.

3. They accustom the child to attach clear ideas to words; enrich his mind with information, and impart to him copiousness of language.

4. They prepare him for the comparative study of foreign languages, by ensuring the knowledge of the native tongue, through which the foreign is to be acquired.

5. They foster in him a taste for the reading of instructive books and for the society of well-informed persons, by habituating him to take part in serious conversation.

6. They give an insight into the laws of nature, and early impress a child with a deep conviction of the wisdom, omnipotence, and goodness of God.

7. These conversations, in furnishing the preceptor with the means of properly exciting, directing, and gratifying the natural inquisitiveness of children, provide the best rudiments of

instruction, and lay a solid basis for the great edifice of intellectual education.

This order is consistent with reason: the exercises of the senses should be made subservient to those of the mind, in conformity with the course of nature, which develops the physical before the mental faculties, and prompts man always to ascend from the material to the intellectual world.

Passing from the native to a foreign language, we have classified the great ends proposed from the study, investigated their relative importance, and ascertained the order in which they should be attained. *To understand* is the first stage in the study of a language, *to express oneself* is the second: hence the necessity of *reading* and *hearing* before *speaking* and *writing*—of sowing before reaping,—has been insisted upon throughout. This mode of proceeding, prescribed by nature, forms the groundwork on which, in the learning of foreign languages, classification of the different objects of study is based. Reading and hearing, as the mediums through which ideas are received and the materials of language acquired, possess incalculable advantages as ultimate objects, and as means of advancement in the other two branches; they assume, in this double point of view, priority over speaking and writing.

The unsuitableness of grammar for childhood, and its inefficiency as a preparation for acquiring the arts of reading and hearing having been demonstrated, we urged the necessity of laying it aside in the first stages of the study. Grammar does not so much teach to speak a language as to speak about it. Useful as it must be to philologists and professors of language, it is only of secondary importance to the generality of learners, who aim at practice more than at theory. But, in any case, it will always be easily learned when the student is acquainted with the facts on which it rests, and without which it is unintelligible. Study of the foreign grammar is, therefore, in our method, postponed until practical acquaintance with the written and the spoken language enables the learner to infer the rules from the phraseology, and to apply them to the expression of thought. As the syntactical principles of a language are available chiefly in speaking and writing, it is to assist in acquiring these two arts that we have given directions for the prosecution of a practical course of grammar, when young people have the assistance of an instructor. Adults who, from taste or the exigencies of their future avocation, wish to study grammatical

science, may, at any time and by themselves, derive from standard works on the subject extensive information on the theory of language.

SECT. II.—SUMMARY OF THE SECOND PART.

Words, as the elementary signs of ideas, have been the first objects of consideration in devising a method for the acquisition of languages. Our classification of the parts of speech, resting on their respective functions and relative importance, has elicited the order and manner in which they should be learned for the various purposes of intellectual communication; while our strictures on comparative grammar, presented as a philosophical investigation of the general principles of language, have shown by the many irregularities of particular grammars, that success in linguistical studies depends more on imitation and judicious practice than on study of syntactical rules.

READING being practised independently of class duties, each pupil advances in it as time and ability permit. All the members of one class may even read different books without interfering with each other's improvement. But, in the professor's presence, any part of a standard work which they have read may, in class, be used as a text for analysing words, style, or subject, according to the progress of the learners. These form three stages in the attainment of the first branch; and a different manner of proceeding has been pointed out, as the learner successively aims at each.

It was seen that, at the outset of the study, there are three ways of proceeding to arrive at the meaning of foreign authors, namely, by the help of a teacher, by verbal interpretations affixed to the text, and by a dictionary. The assistance of a teacher is the most efficient when the learners are very young, and best calculated for private instruction; books with interpretations are the fittest for adults, and most available in public instruction; as for the dictionary, unsuitable to beginners, it may be resorted to with most profit and least expenditure of time by those who have already gained some proficiency in the language. But, at any period of the study, published translations of standard works, ancient or modern, will prove very useful, not only to learners for acquiring the arts of reading and writing the foreign language, or for improving their style in the native tongue, but

also to instructors who are not thoroughly versed in the two idioms.

How to read and *what* to read have been clearly indicated. Translation and mental reading come in succession. In the first stage, the learner translates literally, to become acquainted with the true import of the foreign words; in the second, he translates freely, to render rightly the original text; and, in the last stage, he reads mentally, dispensing altogether with translation, the better to attend to the subject and enter into the spirit of the work. So close is the connection between ideas and words, that, to conceive all that an author has expressed, and to share the emotions under which he wrote, he must be read in his own language.

If improvement in the native tongue is the desired object, the learner perseveres in translating freely into it from the foreign; if, on the contrary, the end proposed is to reach the highest degree of knowledge in the foreign, he attends to the ideas and expressions of the foreign author, and considers the translation from it into his own as secondary. The first practice—translation—suits best the study of the ancient languages, which are learned chiefly for the sake of the literary models they possess; the second—mental reading—is the most proper for modern languages, which are learned as vehicles of intellectual communication.

The extensive course of reading which we prescribe, as indispensable for attaining perfect knowledge of a language, is, if judiciously pursued, not only a means of storing the mind with useful information and the materials of speech, but also the best preparation for comprehending oral discourse under all circumstances. In fact, one who reads a foreign language can soon be made to understand it when spoken: and, this point once gained, the art of speaking is of easy acquisition.

The great number of volumes required for this course may perhaps be considered rather expensive; but, if the love of an opulent parent for his children be equal to his pecuniary resources, will he not gladly afford the means of securing their real improvement? This expense, however, would not perhaps amount to twelve pounds in the course of their education. How many parents there are who often spend double that sum in absurd and ostentatious displays,—in a dinner or an evening party, which affords only a few hours' pleasure! As for learners who are less favoured by fortune, we would suggest for their use the

formation of a classical library under the care and direction of the instructor. A very trifling quarterly contribution would give them access to an extensive collection of standard works, by which their improvement in the language might be secured and taste for its literature promoted. In a living language they might be easily supplied with instructive and moral works suitable to their different ages and degrees of proficiency.

HEARING, or the power of understanding the spoken language, is the second branch in importance and the stepping-stone to speaking: its acquisition, consequent on that of reading, and demanding considerably less time, depends on the professor, whose office it is to familiarise his pupils with the oral expression, while they, by themselves, gain acquaintance with the written language.

The exercises in hearing vary, according as the object proposed is the comprehension of the foreign language when spoken, or the acquisition of its pronunciation. For the attainment of the first, beginners translate by fragments what is read to them, and, at an advanced stage, mentally attend to the sense of the book read consecutively by the instructor; for the attainment of the second, they repeat after him phrases gradually lengthened as familiarity is gained with the foreign pronunciation. The professor, in fact, reads by fragments or consecutively, slowly or rapidly, and more or less distinctly, as has been suggested for accomplishing these two objects. In classes, all the learners simultaneously and equally profit by what is read to them, whatever be their number and different degrees of proficiency. Those who easily understand what is read attend more particularly to the pronunciation, whilst those who are less advanced endeavour to follow the ideas conveyed by the articulate words; thus, no time is lost by any one, no habits of idleness or inattention are formed, as commonly happens whenever they practise in class individual oral reading and oral translation.

When learners have gained proficiency in the art of understanding oral discourse, the hearing exercise is made subservient to their acquisition of useful knowledge by lectures delivered in the foreign language itself. Their advancement in speaking both the native and the foreign language is also ensured by their giving in one or the other, at different periods of the study, the substance of those lectures, as also of a narrative, dissertation, or passage read to them from a foreign author. As a test by which the degree of proficiency of advanced learners

may be ascertained, both in hearing the foreign language and writing their own, the professor occasionally dictates in the former a passage of which they write an extemporaneous translation in the latter.

The practice on which we insist, as being that of nature,—coming at words through ideas, and acquiring them by long continued exercise in reading books and hearing the living voice,—is the most efficient by which the orthography, pronunciation, and materials of a language can be acquired, and, by the law of habit, indelibly retained. It principally aims at preventing the commission of errors, without neglecting to provide for the correction of those which proceed from a bad method.

Means have been suggested for mastering in the speediest way the arts of reading and hearing; because they are the most important departments in the study of a foreign idiom, whether considered as ends, or as instruments with which to secure the manifold benefits which have been shown to arise from that study. With their assistance no difficulty would be found in acquiring the arts of speaking and writing. However, these arts would lose much of their importance if the power of understanding foreign languages—written and spoken—were extensively diffused among the principal nations of the civilised world; because that power would then be fully sufficient for international exchange of thought. This grand desideratum could be the more easily obtained as comprehension of the written language, which is independent of teachers, would prepare a learner to acquire, in a few weeks, from any person acquainted with a foreign idiom the ability to understand it when spoken. Thus, at a trifling expense, and in a comparatively short time, men of different countries would be enabled to commune and feel perfectly at home in each other's society.

The study of Eastern languages in particular would be forwarded by the course above recommended; for those who learn them, being usually adults, may have neither time nor inclination to attend to investigations of their origin, alphabets, grammar, and genius, which do not advance the practice; and if these investigations interest them, it is obvious that they can be more successfully pursued after some acquaintance with the languages is gained, than in utter ignorance of them. Professors of Oriental languages would, therefore, render great service to philological pursuits if, in illustration of their grammatical disquisitions, they contrived means by which practical knowledge of these

idioms could be easily gained. Let them employ their erudition and part of their leisure in attaching to Eastern manuscripts and works, interpretations and explanatory notes which may facilitate the reading of them.

SPEAKING depending in great measure on practice in hearing, the professor prepares his pupils for its acquisition, by forming, in the foreign language, numerous expressions, to familiarise them with its pronunciation and idiomatical as well as syntactical forms; he afterwards exercises their powers of imitation and analogy by introducing into English sentences the words corresponding to the foreign ones which they have learned, and desiring them to turn these sentences into the foreign language, conformably to the model expressions previously offered to their attention. By this means he can proportion the difficulty to their different capacities and previous knowledge. Each question he asks includes their various lessons—the nouns, verbs, words of the Second Class, and even grammatical rules, when these are learned. Thus time is saved, and the students exercise memory in treasuring up the elements of speech, and judgment in combining them on a principle of analogy. The attention of all is kept alive by the ever-varying sentences proposed as problems to be solved. Unity and variety constitute the spirit of this exercise: the same idea, the same idiom is repeated, and the same principle illustrated by endless variation of phrases. Sometimes, by successive and diversified additions, a verb serves for the expression of an infinite number of propositions; sometimes also complete sentences, taken from good authors, are decomposed and modified indefinitely. The learners, passing from the decomposition of model phrases to the construction of similar ones, conform to the natural mode of action of the human mind, which invariably proceeds from analysis to synthesis.

The exercise of phrase-making, which may truly be called *practical syntax*, affords to the instructor great facilities for assisting his pupils in acquiring the art of speaking the foreign language. He familiarises them with the foreign idioms, and initiates them into the grammar, by making them infer the principle, whenever he has supplied them with a sufficient number of facts from which it may be deduced. He habituates them to form their own phraseology, to multiply expressions at will, and adapt them to the circumstances of social intercourse in which they may afterwards be placed. Whereas the learning

of dialogues renders the abilities of a professor useless to his pupils, and burdens the memory with ready-made phrases which, numerous as they may be, will seldom find their application in the diversified circumstances in which their possessors may be placed.

At a more advanced period, when the learner has gained command of words, and can easily combine them into detached sentences, he goes a step farther and connects them into narratives, the length of which increases with his proficiency. The transition from these to the expression of his own ideas will be rapid, if his instructor continues to take an active part in his acquisition of this Branch. It is by his example and with his aid, that the learner is enabled to converse in the foreign language.

The exercises of phrase-making, narration, and conversation afford many opportunities of bringing into practice the pronunciation acquired from constant hearing, and from repeating words and phrases after the teacher. These exercises in pronunciation more than supply the wants of the learner in that respect, and altogether preclude the necessity of oral reading, so perversely and so generally resorted to.

WRITING, although of comparatively little importance, and, for this reason, the last Branch in the order of study, has, nevertheless, received a large share of attention: a series of gradual compositions, founded on imitation and analogy, and parallel to the exercises recommended for speaking, ensures to learners the power of expressing their thoughts and sentiments in the foreign language. Models are made the basis of improvement in writing as in speaking; for custom, the arbiter of language, is the best guide for writers. A model phrase, or a model composition may be modified indefinitely by the addition, substitution, and inversion of accessaries: thus, analogy enables learners to make any given idea or subject suit all the requirements of intellectual communication.

But, of all the means employed for acquiring the fourth Branch, double translation claims a decided superiority. It combines all the advantages which can be expected from written exercises: it imparts in the most certain manner the orthography of a foreign language, stores the memory with its words, familiarises the learner with its idioms, as well as with its grammatical construction, and trains the mind to harmony and elegance of style. It is equally applicable to the dead and the living languages; it teaches both the native and the foreign; and, by affording to the student a double opportunity for comparing

them, it exhibits to him their genius; finally, it does not necessarily require the superintendence of an instructor, whose time, ability, and information may be turned to better account, by being exclusively devoted to the spoken language in modern idioms and to explanation of the classics in the ancient.

If, however, the early age of learners, or the constitution of a class, renders it necessary to submit to an instructor the two versions of the double translation, his correction of them combines expedition and efficiency. Of the considerable time usually employed in correcting the grammatical exercises of a large class, only a very small portion is devoted to each pupil, the greater part of it is unprofitable to the others, who, meanwhile, remain idle. By the plan which we suggest, the correction demands much less time, calls for the simultaneous attention of all the members of the class, and elicits from the professor critical observations, for which grammatical exercises afford no opportunity. In public instruction double translation possesses the great advantage that, furnishing the means of increasing and decreasing the difficulty at will, it permits the same task to be given in common to persons of very unequal proficiency, who happen to be in the same class.

The facility with which this course enables a professor to teach many persons as efficiently as one and to bring together learners of different degrees of proficiency, is common to the four branches. The practice of translating from hearing, and of pronouncing after the teacher, the oral exercise of phrase-making, the narrations, and the correcting of double translation, renders the various members of a class rather subservient than prejudicial to each other's progress. Hence this mode of teaching, simultaneous in its different departments, is well adapted to public instruction.

In the details of the course recommended for learning foreign languages, we have given minute directions for self-instruction, when reading and writing are alone aimed at, as is particularly the case in Latin and Greek; and we have pointed out the means of acquiring the spoken language, which is most desirable in the case of living languages, and which becomes paramount when learners have the advantage of a teacher. We have endeavoured to render the information and abilities of the latter as well as his short and valuable lessons most profitable to learners, by recommending as suitable exercises, when with him, such as cannot be practised in his absence.

SECT. III.—PARALLEL OF THE SYSTEM UNFOLDED IN THIS WORK AND THE ORDINARY METHODS.

Every object proposed from the study of a foreign language is, in our system, presented to the attention of learners in the order and in the manner prescribed by nature; the several exercises indispensable for gaining complete knowledge of it come in succession, so that an accumulation of difficulties is avoided. This division of labour has enabled us to do away with the heterogeneous medley of lessons, which, under the long established system of schools, obstructs the path of study, confuses and disheartens learners.

Two volumes are, at any period of the learner's progress, sufficient for all the requirements of a language,—one containing the verbs and the words of the Second Class; the other being a reading-book with literal interpretation attached to the foreign text; as he advances, the first is exchanged for a grammar, and the second for works in which the text is gradually divested of explanation until none is required. These works are not only instrumental in imparting the power of understanding the language written and spoken; but they also offer model phrases and model subjects for practice in speaking, and afford means of attaining, through double translation, the art of writing both the native and the foreign language.

The usual practice of burdening children with a diversity of lessons, probably takes its rise in the unreasonable demand of parents for ostensible learning. They wish to get value for their money, and, as they cannot always judge of mental development, the master is obliged, in his own defence, to cram exhibitable knowledge into his pupils. Nothing hinders improvement more than this multiplicity of lessons. When attention is directed to different objects at the same time, the faculties of reflection and abstraction remain inactive. The greater number of children, not feeling interested in their lessons put off learning them to the last moment; and soon forget what is thus hastily committed to memory. In class, pupils cannot avoid being inattentive and listless during the performance of mnemonic exercises in which neither they nor their instructors can take any interest. The most diligent scholars feel no inducement to listen when others are repeating what they already know; idlers are probably, during that time, engaged in preparing some

excuse, or some contrivance to impose on the master, or to escape the rod. At best, each member of a class, while waiting for his turn to be examined, loses all the time occupied by the others in going through their lessons. But, worse than all, this lazy hearing of lessons being usually practised to ascertain veracity rather than give assistance, debases moral character by constant suspicion.

Our censure of mnemonic lessons applies exclusively to those branches of instruction which should be more properly addressed to the judgment; it does not bear on the study of words as elements of phrase-making, nor on learning select pieces in prose and verse for the practice of elocutional recitations. These two exercises are not so objectionable in class as repetition of the lessons above alluded to; for they do not consist in merely parroting what has been committed to memory, nor, on the teacher simply ascertaining the diligence or veracity of his pupils. Their application to a useful purpose not only justifies their adoption, but renders them both interesting and instructive to all the members of the class.

The few lessons learned are not recited in class; but the pupils are taught by the instructor how to apply them. Self-instruction in his absence prepares them to profit by his presence. In the unnatural methods most generally pursued, the professor has little to do except to correct grammatical exercises and listen to his pupils reading aloud, translating, parsing, and reciting; in ours, he conforms to the imitative and analogical process of nature by making them practise at once what is ultimately required,—hearing and speaking the foreign language: he imparts to them information which they cannot obtain from books; he teaches them what they cannot learn by themselves, and thus promotes their improvement, even though they have not prepared any thing for him. The practice of doing little more than hearing lessons has contributed much to render the teacher's assistance unprofitable, and bring his office into disrepute. He who makes his chief occupation consist in hearing his pupils repeat what they have learned in the intervals of his lessons, does not render them much more valuable services than a nursery-maid would be capable of affording. The business of the instructor ought to begin where the purport of the book ends.

By the present method learners can easily understand the reason of what they do, because the means are always consistent with the end: all their exercises are the very objects aimed at in

the study of a language. Seeing their instructor perform his part, they cannot but be anxious to act their own, particularly as they find that every unnecessary obstacle is removed, and that the tasks imposed on them are few, agreeable, and indispensable. They may then be trusted for the fulfilment of their duty. The confidence placed in them cultivates moral feeling; it would almost suffice to make them honourable even were they otherwise inclined.

Although, in this system, memory is not engaged in learning vocabularies, dialogues, extracts, and rules of grammar, it must not be inferred that it is not brought into action. The considerable number of words and idioms which, in the course of reading and hearing, come within the observation and practice of learners in connection with valuable information, give to the retentive faculty sufficient scope for exercise, while practice in phrase-making, narration and conversation, calls into full play recollection and judgment. Again, the model expressions offered for imitation in the analogical speaking exercise, and the second version of the double translation, which aims at reproducing the original text, cultivate intellectual memory: in all these instances it is engaged on ideas as well as on words.

The proposed method does not allow any faculty to remain inactive: it is both intuitive and intellectual. All the powers of a child, physical and mental, which can be made to bear on language, harmoniously concur in the study. The *eye* and the *ear* are as busily engaged in receiving *impressions* as are attention and memory in observing and retaining them; the *voice* and the *hand* are as diligently employed in giving out *expressions*, as imagination and judgment in preparing and combining them.

The formation of habits, which is so little considered in the generality of methods, has been insisted upon, as being the only means of retaining the practical knowledge of a language in its four departments. As the mind acts simultaneously with the physical organs in this four-fold acquisition, it has been made to contract habits corresponding to those of the *eye* in *reading* the language, to those of the *ear* in *hearing*, to those of the *tongue* in *speaking*, and to those of the *hand* in *writing*.

Finally, every part of the system leads a learner, by a progressive series of exercises, to the power of thinking in the foreign language, that is, of conceiving the ideas of others and expressing his own without the intervening medium of the native tongue. This great desideratum, by which knowledge of a foreign idiom is assimilated to that of the vernacular, although indis-

pensable to render its possession useful under all circumstances, is never contemplated in the routine of scholastic acquirements: learners translate, but read not the classics; their acquaintance with them is through a distorted medium which keeps from view all that is beautiful in them. Thus is one of the great aims of classical studies defeated.

In the ordinary methods, students frequently lose sight of the end in pursuing the means: they are given to understand that their labour is over when they begin to read aloud, translate or parse the foreign language with fluency, when they have conjugated all the verbs and repeated a volume of dialogues, when they have learned all the rules and written all the exercises of their grammar; and yet all these are only preliminary acquisitions, unavailable in the business of life.

This dreary circle of unprofitable tasks, without the cheering prospect of future advantage, has been, until now, the gloomy lot of young people. The present work has been undertaken to assist in delivering the rising generation from the wretchedness endured by their fathers: we have endeavoured to secure to learners, as they advance, the reward of their industry,—to make them conscious of improvement by increased facility in understanding the written and spoken language, in combining words and in narrations, in recollecting the foreign text of the double translation, and in original compositions,—true measures of progress in really useful acquirements. Thus every new step is an encouragement to press on farther, and they proceed with increasing delight and ardour as they feel conscious that they approach the goal.

We have, throughout, adduced reasons for our recommendation of particular exercises, and shown the benefits which they confer. These reasons, or others which the professor may have in support of any particular plan which he adopts, he should communicate to his pupils, when they are of an age to understand and appreciate them. Being thus rendered conscious of the usefulness of their various exercises, they will perform them with more pleasure and apply to study with more diligence and alacrity.

Many of the principles unfolded in this work have, at different times, been brought into practice, but, in an isolated and incomplete manner, which has lessened the advantages to be expected from them. The mutual assistance of which they are capable, and on which their efficiency principally depends, has been generally overlooked, owing sometimes to the exaggerated importance

attributed to some exclusively, at other times to neglect of the exercises which could fully elicit them, and, not unfrequently, to the immature age at which they are imposed on learners.

The interlineal translations of the so-called "Hamiltonian method," great as is the aid they afford in acquiring the art of reading, for which alone that method was recommended by Locke, Dumarsais, and Condillac, cannot, when unconnected with other exercises, enable learners to converse or compose in a foreign language. These writers, in their strictures on this subject, proposing exclusively to improve classical studies, naturally confined their suggestions to the means of facilitating the first steps in Latin reading: they never pretended that the interlineal method had power beyond this.

Study of a model work, as recommended by Jacotot, is undoubtedly useful; but it is a perversion of principles to confine learners to one work and impose it on them as a task of memory, especially before they know anything of the foreign pronunciation. This practice, however, is not more preposterous than his recommendation of various other exercises on the language, to be performed under the direction of an instructor *ignorant of that language*.

Dufief and Ollendorff are as opposed to each other in the mode of learning a language as they are to Locke, Dumarsais, Condillac, and Jacotot, yet each proclaims himself the faithful interpreter of nature, because he gives precedence to the facts of language over the rules of grammar. But this is not sufficient to justify the assumption; and, as was shown in the foregoing pages, neither the practice of learning ready-made phrases, nor that of writing exercises, in which their respective methods chiefly consist, could completely secure the power of expression—the only acquirement at which they apparently aim: much less could they forward students in reading standard authors, understanding foreigners, or pronouncing their language. The very title of Ollendorff's work* shows that he did not even suspect that *hearing* was one of the departments of a language to be acquired. Captain Basil Hall, who, in learning French and German, had used the antagonist methods of Dufief and Ollendorff, praised them both equally; but on what ground we cannot discover. However, it is most probable that the progress he made in those languages was due less to the plans pursued than to his own industry and great mental powers.

* *A New Method of Learning to Read, Write, and Speak a Language in Six Months.*

The various exercises which constitute the method of Robertson, confine learners to a very limited practice of the foreign language; they are, besides, introduced in wrong order; for they teach the pronunciation before the signification of the foreign words. However, its chief defects consist in making pupils too much depend on the teacher, and not providing for their advancement in reading during the intervals of lessons. The extremely limited text which is studied throughout the entire course, with whatever care it is analysed in class, can never impart complete practical knowledge of a foreign language in its four departments.

Pluche, Radonvilliers, Lemare, Le Vert, and other authors of special treatises on teaching and learning languages, notwithstanding the justness and practicability of some of their views, have all neglected useful exercises and, in particular, those on which is founded improvement both in the native tongue and in hearing and speaking the foreign. None have even made the remotest allusion to the necessity or the means of acquiring the power of thinking in the latter. As to the excellent suggestions recently made by Professor J. S. Blackie on the application of the natural process to the acquisition of foreign languages, it is to be regretted that he has not sufficiently unfolded the process by which they may be brought to practice.

Weiss is perhaps the only author who has laid down the philosophical principles on which this study should be conducted; but the condensed generalities to which, like Professor Blackie, he confined himself, would not enable inexperienced teachers or learners to apply his valuable suggestions to all the details inseparable from a complete acquisition of a living language. However, his method having been partly followed in the establishments of Pestalozzi and Fellenberg, its practical application will be found in the works which unfold their systems. For our own part, we have endeavoured to tread in the steps of these two eminent educationists. *

SECT. IV.—THE LEARNING OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN MATURE AGE.

The vulgar prejudice which represents the age of manhood as unsuited to the learning of a language arises, in great measure, from the injudicious methods pursued for its acquisition. The

* See, in Appendix, No. 11., a list of works which treat of the study of languages.

childish and irksome task of learning by rote grammars, vocabularies, and dialogues; the absurd practice of writing exercises at the outset, the useless labour of scanning and making verses, and the great expenditure of time resulting from frequent reference to a dictionary, have all led to this erroneous opinion. If no exercises made part of the study of languages, ancient or modern, but such as are indispensable, many persons would be induced to learn them, who are now deterred by the obstacles thrown in their way. The course which we prescribe removes these obstacles, and considerably facilitates the study to persons advanced in life.

A child, it is true, acquires a language practically without effort; but, as stated in Book IV., Chap. I., Sec. II, he cannot, in the learning of a foreign idiom, under ordinary circumstances, compete with an adult who possesses all the resources of attention, reasoning, experience, and knowledge; all the moral and intellectual qualities indispensable to serious and continuous studies. Curiosity, perception, sympathy, imitation, memory, and powers of analogy, all of which predominate in infancy, suffice to acquire the mother-tongue by the natural process; but steadiness of purpose and capability of self-teaching, powers of reflection, comparison, analysis, induction, and deduction—all powerful auxiliaries to the learning of a foreign language by the comparative process—are in full vigour only in the adult, and more than make up for any deficiency of memory; he has, consequently, in this study, very great advantages over a child who follows the same process. His powers of abstraction and discrimination enable him to avail more effectually of the grammatical principles and critical annotations intended to assist in the acquisition of the language; his greater acquaintance with things causes him to apprehend more readily and clearly the meaning of the foreign authors; his more extensive knowledge of the native tongue renders translation from them more easy and accurate; and his mind, approaching nearer to their level, can more fully enter into their spirit and appreciate their merit. Plutarch informs us that, having commenced the study of Latin at an advanced age, he learned it very rapidly: because the knowledge which he had previously acquired of things considerably assisted him in comprehending the terms used by the Latin writers.

If a man could take two hours daily from business or pleasure and direct all the energy of his mind to one of those

studies to which childhood is commonly subjected, he would learn more quickly and better than the child, whose faculties have not yet reached full development, and whose attention cannot easily be fixed or concentrated. And if his determination were assisted by natural abilities and a cultivated mind, it would produce results compared to which the acquisitions of childhood bear the character of weakness and imbecility. We entertain no doubt that, with a proper comparative method, a person of forty or fifty could, in six months, make more progress in acquiring what is useful in languages than a child of eight could in as many years. The truth of this assertion is sufficiently proved by experience; for, of the large number of children who commence the learning of a foreign language at school before they are twelve years old, a very small proportion, we believe, succeed in acquiring even only the first Branch, after several years' toiling; whereas almost every adult who aims at this acquisition, attains it in a comparatively short time.

Themistocles, when advanced in life, learned in one year the Persian language so well as to be able to converse with the King of Persia on state affairs better, says his biographer, than the Persians themselves. Cato, the censor, learned Greek in his old age, and made great proficiency in it. Alfieri wrote very good verses in that language, although he did not study it until he was forty-eight. Maugard, an eminent French grammarian, learned Italian and Spanish after the age of sixty, and, according to his own account, knew them so well, after three months' study, that he thought himself competent to teach them. Dr. Johnson, when over seventy, undertook the study of Dutch, with a view to test his capability to learn at that advanced age; the success of the experiment fully satisfied him that the powers of his mind were still unimpaired. Ogilby, the translator of Virgil and Homer, had been a dancing-master; he commenced the study of Latin in his fortieth year and that of Greek in his fifty-fourth year. Sir William Jones had passed his thirtieth year when he began to learn Eastern languages, in which he is known to have been deeply versed.

As another remarkable instance of the facility with which languages may be learned in manhood, we may mention Cardinal Mezzofanti, who has but recently died. Lord Byron, in his "Detached Thoughts," bestows on him this spirited and well-deserved eulogium: "He is a master of languages, the Briareus

of parts of speech, a walking Polyglott, and more, who ought to have existed at the time of the Tower of Babel, as universal interpreter."

Cardinal Mezzofanti had not, previous to the age of twenty-five, studied any modern language; and the occasion upon which this taste, destined to lead him to just celebrity, was developed, was as flattering to his own benevolence, as it was productive of beneficial results to others. Bologna, his native city, was, in the commencement of the French invasion, occupied by foreign troops, amongst whom were French, Germans, Poles, and other strangers. An hospital was established there for the use of these soldiers; but it was found impossible to afford them the consolations of religion, owing to ignorance of their languages among the clergy. Mezzofanti, then a priest, animated by a holy zeal, determined upon overcoming the difficulty: he first applied himself to German, which he learned with incredible celerity, so that he was soon able to confess the German soldiers of the Catholic persuasion. He next learned French, then English, and continued, to an advanced age, to study other languages. He understood, it is said, thirty or forty different idioms.*

To sum up the facts illustrative of the opinion which forms the subject of this Section, we may safely affirm that the great majority of those who have been distinguished for knowledge of many languages, have acquired them after the period of school, and, so far as reading goes, have acquired them without the assistance of teachers.

SECT. V.—OF AN APTITUDE FOR LANGUAGES.

Some persons lament that they have not a talent for learning languages, or, as phrenologists express it, the organ of language: this is often but a plea for want of attention, perseverance, or inclination to study. It has been seen through the foregoing pages that no superiority of intellect is required for attaining that practical knowledge of a foreign idiom, which reading and familiar conversation demand. People of inferior capacity are often found to possess great command of words in their own

* For these particulars on Cardinal Mezzofanti the author is indebted to his friend Dr. Joseph Olliffe, of Paris, who was himself personally acquainted with this celebrated man.

tongue: this power they have gained by practice; and, by practice, they may effect the same in another language. It has been our lot to meet, in the course of life, thousands of persons, young and old, studying foreign languages, and, although we turned attention to their progress expressly to ascertain the truth of the phrenological theory, which ascribes to large and prominent eyes great linguistic powers, we have no recollection that the possessors of such eyes retained the foreign words or caught the foreign sounds one iota better than those not so gifted.

Other persons erroneously imagine that it is requisite to have a musical ear, to acquire the pronunciation of a foreign language. If this were the case, musical men would have the best chance of success; but it is not so. Those who are personally acquainted with foreign musicians well know that their pronunciation of a language not their own is not always commensurate with the justness and acuteness of their ear, nor with the time they have resided in the country where that language is spoken. Want of a musical ear is no obstacle to acquiring pronunciation; it involves neither general defect of hearing, nor general slowness of discrimination in cases of nice diversity. Those who labour under this disadvantage often perceive very readily the faintest whisper and distinguish the slightest shade of difference in the mere vocal sounds and articulations which constitute the varieties of language. All that is required is freedom from organic defect. Whoever pronounces one language correctly, may equally well pronounce a second, if he adopt the same course which he followed in acquiring the first. It must, however, be observed that, of the two elements of pronunciation,—sounds and articulations,—the second presenting more difficulty than the first, that language which contains the greater number of them, will be the most difficult to foreigners; and *vice versâ*, the people whose language it is, will find the pronunciation of other languages proportionably easy. Hence we find that northern nations, whose languages abound in articulations, learn foreign languages with much greater facility than the southern do. The English, less than any other people, should despair of acquiring the pronunciation of another language after having accomplished the Herculean task presented by their own.

Although the acquisition of foreign languages is accessible to all capacities, those persons will succeed best in gaining practical knowledge of them for ordinary purposes, who, in addition to

attention and perseverance, possess flexible vocal organs, facility of imitation, retentive memory, and a judgment quick in forming inductions from analogy. High intellectual powers cannot, however, but considerably aid the student, as they are, indeed, a great help in every undertaking. Simple as stone-breaking is, of two labourers engaged in it the more intelligent will certainly better perform his task.

A firm determination and good method will do more towards successful attainment of a foreign language than the possession of any particular quality of the mind. Nature may give to the intellect of every man an individual character which distinguishes it from all others; but primitive inequalities are soon lost in those greater inequalities which result from art and from the power of method. A child with a lever is stronger than Hercules abandoned to his own strength.

SECT. VI.—ACQUIREMENT OF A FOREIGN LIVING LANGUAGE AT HOME OR ABROAD.

The method which has been minutely detailed, and especially that part which relates to the process of reading to the learner, places him in a more favourable position for acquiring a foreign language than social intercourse in the country itself in which it is spoken; for, admitting even, what is far from being always the case, that he then mixes much with its inhabitants, he has no chance of understanding them for a considerable time; because the nature and rapidity of ordinary conversation do not permit the oral expression to be accompanied with the interpreting signs of the language of action, as when young children are spoken to. His progress in this department, and, consequently, in its counterpart, the art of speaking, must be much impeded, the more so as he cannot, with propriety, stop strangers at every word requiring explanation, as he might his instructor at home. The facility afforded to learn a foreign language abroad may be experienced in childhood, not in manhood.

A child under the care of his parents, not having to provide for his own wants, is not compelled to use words before they have grown familiar to him by repetition. He mixes with society only to look on and listen; he acquires words with ideas, and his progress in the language is certain. An adult, differently circumstanced, cannot, like the child, strictly adhere to the gradual

process of nature: he cannot silently listen; he must convey as well as receive ideas. If, when abroad, he has occasion to communicate with the people respecting the ordinary wants of social life, if he requires to transact business, or wishes to gratify curiosity, he uses the words before he has heard them sufficiently to know their pronunciation. The persons whom he addresses, unwilling to discourage him, or more eager to interpret his meaning than to set him right, allow his errors, whether of pronunciation or construction, to remain uncorrected; and, taking into account the difficulty which their language presents to a foreigner, they not unfrequently praise him for any attempt, however unsuccessful: on his part, not considering the mental reservation with which the compliment is made, he often takes it to the letter. Thus he is confirmed in his errors, especially those of pronunciation, and contracts defective habits which afterwards can scarcely be removed. To our own knowledge, it has sometimes proved no small difficulty to convince an English person of his error, who, in French, pronounced *ung* for *un*, *paw* for *pas*, *pew* for *peu*, or a foreigner who pronounced *dis* or *zis* for *this*, *sheep* for *ship*, *too* for *to*, *tongs* for *tongues*.

After a year's practice in bad pronunciation one has indeed little chance of ever pronouncing a foreign language correctly, although continuing to reside abroad; so, in writing the vernacular, he who has for a time practised incorrect spelling, usually remains an incorrect speller for life, notwithstanding his daily reading. A hearer or reader who is unaware of his deficiency in pronunciation and orthography, does not, when intent on the sense, bestow on words the attention which would be requisite for correcting or even detecting previous bad habits in either of these departments. A residence abroad is not then, in general, as favourable as it appears, since the natural method on which success depends cannot be pursued in the case of adults. This fact is fully proved by the rare instances which are met with of persons who, as it has already been remarked, succeed in speaking a foreign language with purity, even after long residence in the country where it is spoken.

If, in his native place, a learner have access to a large and select collection of foreign works; and if he can frequently enjoy the society of an instructor who pronounces the foreign language correctly, and who, in conformity with our suggestions, will assiduously read or speak it to him, his practice of the language may be as great as if he were in the country where it is spoken,

and must certainly be safer. When abroad, being in daily contact with a variety of uneducated people, whose services are indispensable, and who often speak in the most incorrrect and vulgar manner, erroneous impressions must constantly be received, which will be the more easily imbibed as they are the first, and as ignorance of the language precludes the possibility of discriminating between right and wrong. The home learner does not labour under the same disadvantage; for he acquires only correct expressions from his books, hears only a pure pronunciation from his teacher, without the counteracting influence of bad example, and is sure, whether he speaks or writes, to have all his errors corrected.

The circumstance of being abroad is favourable to the learning of a foreign language, only when the opportunity is afforded of frequently hearing good models and of bringing into use the materials of language as they are acquired. But the opportunity does not generally fall to the lot of travellers; many pass through a country without gaining admittance to the society of the natives, without even having either time or inclination to read, —their practice of the language being frequently confined to the exchange of some familiar ideas with servants of hotels, or an accidental fellow-traveller who chances to be communicative. The less they know the foreign language the less they avail themselves of the opportunities of hearing or speaking it, because the more reluctant are they to exhibit deficiency in the presence of well-educated natives. It must have come within the observation of our readers that not a few persons have returned from travels abroad with but a scanty stock of foreign phraseology.

It may then be fairly concluded that, at home, by adopting a proper course, a foreign language may be learned better than abroad; for the rapidity of acquisition and facility of expression which result from mixing much with the natives, when that can be effected, are almost always obtained at the expense of correctness. The most advisable plan, whenever practicable, is to acquire at home some proficiency in hearing and speaking the language, and complete the acquisition by practice abroad.

But, whether a foreign living language be learned at home or abroad, it must not be forgotten that the rapid, correct, and complete acquisition of it depends chiefly on the method adopted, and the spirit with which it is pursued. Intrinsically good as a method may be, it will sometimes fail for want of being carried

on in the spirit in which it was formed. To avert this danger, we have endeavoured to leave nothing important unexplained, and have been minute in our directions: observations apparently trifling frequently lead to the most useful results.

To some this minuteness of explanation may appear wearisome; but to the greater number of our readers we hope it will prove serviceable. However, there still remain many practical details which cannot be well entered into, as their usefulness depends on particular contingencies, or circumstances which cannot be foreseen: the unfolding of these must be left to the discretion of the teacher. Let him, above all, guard against blind routine: it is the bane of instruction.

Compelled by truth and the force of conviction, we perhaps have raised the standard of qualifications in parents, teachers, and learners beyond the reach of the generality of people: but, this will be found in accordance with one of the noblest principles of our nature,—human perfectibility; and, although perfection be unattainable, it is the duty of all to keep it in view and approach it as nearly as possible.

We will observe, in concluding, that, as the application of general principles is liable to exceptions, in order to derive from the exercises recommended throughout all the benefits which may be expected from them, it will sometimes be advisable to modify them according to the attainments proposed, or to the age and dispositions of the learners; but, so long as those who study a foreign language conform to the great principles of imitation and analogy, they are on the right road, they follow nature's course, which in this acquisition consists, at first, in listening and reading, then trying to speak and write. Theory comes afterwards to assist practice and complete the knowledge. Such is our method, the spirit of which may be summed up in the these few words, IMITATION INITIATES, PRACTICE ACQUIRES, GRAMMAR PERFECTS, AND HABIT SECURES THE KNOWLEDGE OF A LANGUAGE.

APPENDIX.

NOTES, AND EXTRACTS FROM ENGLISH AND FRENCH WRITERS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE AUTHOR'S SUGGESTIONS.

APPENDIX.

(1) p. 29.

STANDARD WORKS ON PHYSIOLOGY AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

To those who wish to become acquainted with the principles of Physical Education, we recommend the following works :—

A. Combe.—Principles of Physiology.
Do. Physiology of Digestion.

Ch. Caldwell.—Thoughts on Physical Education.

Jn. Barlow.—Connexion between Physiology and Intellectual Philosophy.

Newnham.—On the Reciprocal Influence of Body and Mind.

Meryon.—Physical and Intellectual Constitution of Man.

Dr. Moore.—The Use of the Body in Relation to the Mind.

Renon.—Delineations, Physical, Intellectual, and Moral.

Ch. Londe.—Nouveaux Eléments d' Hygiène.
Do. Gymnastique Médicale.

Ant. Richerand.—Nouveaux Eléments de Physiologie.

J. M. Tissot.—De la Santé des Gens de lettres.

Mich. Friedlander.—De l'Education physique de l'Homme.

Dr. Cerise.—Des Fonctions et des Maladies nerveuses dans leurs rapports avec l'Education sociale et privée, morale et physique.

Cabanis.—Rapport du Physique et du Moral de l' Homme.

Col. Amoros.—Manuel d'Education physique, gymnastique, &c.

(2) p. 54.

STANDARD WORKS ON MORAL PHILOSOPHY AND MORAL EDUCATION.

Among the many excellent works which have been written on Moral Philosophy and Moral Training, and which may be consulted by Educators, we will notice the following :—

Js. Beattie.—Elements of Moral Science.
Dug. Stewart.—Outlines of Moral Philosophy.
A. Fergusson.—Moral Science.
Ad. Smith.—Theory of Moral Sentiments.
W. Paley.—Moral Philosophy.
Ed. Pearson.—Annotations on Paley's Moral Philosophy.
Gisborne.—Principles of Moral Philosophy.
Hartley.—Rule of Life.
Dr. Cogan.—Treatises on the Passions.
Thos. Reid.—Essays on the Active Powers.
Fr. Hutcheson.—System of Moral Philosophy.
Jos. Droz.—Philosophie Morale.
J. M. Degérando.—Du Perfectionnement Moral.
Villeneuve de Bargemon. Economie Politique Chrétienne.

(3) p. 69.

STANDARD WORKS ON INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY AND INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION.

For more ample information on the Nature and Cultivation of the Intellectual Powers, we refer our readers to the following works :—

J. Locke.—Essay on the Human Understanding.
Dug. Stewart.—Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind.
Thos. Reid.—Essays on the Powers of the Human Understanding.
Thos. Brown.—Philosophy of the Mind.
J. Abercrombie.—Inquiries into the Intellectual Powers.

JAS. WATT.—Improvement of the Mind.
BELSHAM.—Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind.
HARTLEY.—Observations on Man.
R. CUDWORTH.—Intellectual System.
JAMES MILL.—Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind.
WM. WHEWELL.—The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences.
A. BRIGHAM.—Remarks on the Influence of Mental Cultivation.
G. COMBE.—System of Phrenology.
CONDILLAC.—Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances humaines.
J. M. DEGÉRANDO.—Des Signes et de l'Art de penser.
DESTUTT TRACY.—Eléments d' Idéologie.
LA ROMIGUIÈRE.—Leçons de Philosophie.
J. M. DEGÉRANDO.—Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie.
V. COUSIN.—Cours de Philosophie.
DAMIRON.—Cours de Philosophie.
MALEBRANCHE.—De la Recherche de la Vérité.

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OF NASAL AND DIPHTHONGAL SOUNDS.

To ascertain if a sound is simple and free from articulation, it suffices to prolong it, keeping at the same time the vocal organs motionless : thus the French nasal sounds *am*, *em*, *an* or *en*, *im* or *in*, *om* or *on*, *um* or *un*, admitting of being indefinitely prolonged, are pure and inarticulate ; they are simple and elementary sounds, although expressed by compound signs. It is, therefore, an error to represent them by the addition of *g*, as is often done in books intended for English students. A foreigner often finding it difficult to drop, in the pronunciation of these sounds, the *m* or *n* which he sees in their written signs, we would suggest that he will infallibly accomplish this object, if, when in the act of producing them, he suddenly ceases the emission of the sonorous air before he closes his lips or moves his tongue—the vocal organs, by the action of which the articulations signified by *m* and *n* are respectively formed. This will be best illustrated and the nature of the sounds best ascertained by the example of a French person.

The sounds represented in French by the double characters *ai*, *au*, *ei*, *eu*, *ou*, are likewise, in whatever word they occur, simple or elementary, since, on being continued for any time, they remain one and the same throughout; but the French sound of *oi* and the long sounds of *i* and *u* in English are compound or diphthongal, because some of the vocal organs move in the act of producing them, and they do not end as they begin,—a double fact which is clearly perceived by pronouncing them very slowly.

We may observe here that many grammarians and orthoëpists, who confound the sign with the thing signified, by calling a vowel *a sound*, have erroneously given the name of *diphthong* (a Greek derivative signifying *two sounds*) to a combination of two vowels, although these may represent but one vocal element. This denomination should be given only to two elementary sounds uttered in one syllable, whether they are represented by one, two, or more letters: thus *i*, *ie*, *eye*, as in *file*, *tie*, *eye*, and *u*, *eu*, *ieu*, *eau*, as in *mute*, *deuce*, *lieu*, *beauty*, are diphthongs.

The French alphabetical combinations given above are, in addition to the vowels, the signs of all the elementary sounds of the French pronunciation; and, with few exceptions, they each represent one particular sound, and only one: but the extreme irregularity of the English pronunciation does not permit the import of the alphabetical characters to be specified in a definite manner; its vowels and their numerous combinations (See the following Tables) stand each for different sounds, either simple or compound, without any fixed rule by which their value is regulated. As an example of this irregularity we adduce the following words, in every one of which *ough* is differently pronounced, *bough*, *cough*, *lough*, *tough*, *though*, *through*, *thorough*, and *hiccough* (old spelling).

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ALPHABETICAL REPRESENTATION OF VOCAL SOUNDS IN FRENCH (1).

Single letters.	ILLUSTRATED in English.	ILLUSTRATED in French.
a	fat	fatal.
	far	fable.
	(*silent*)	août.*
â	far	tâche.
e	dull	ce.
	met	cette (3).
	fat	femme (3).
	(*silent*)	samedi (4).
è, ê	...	près, prêt.
é	fate	pré.
i, î	fee	fit, fît.
o	not	note.
	no	mot.
	(*silent*)	paon, faon.*
ô	no	nôtre.
u, û	...	but, bût.
	not	album (5).
	(*silent*)	qui.
y	fee	tyran.
	you	yole.
	...	moyen(i-i).

Compound letters (2).	ILLUSTRATED in English.	ILLUSTRATED in French.
ai, aî	...	dînais, naît (è) (6).
	fate	dînai.
	dull	faisons (7).
au, eau	no	cause, beau.
	not	mauvais.
ei	...	veine (è).
	dull	orgueil.
eu, eû, œu	...	ceux, jeûne, vœu.
	dull	seul, œuf (8).
	...	j' eus (u) (9).
oi, oî	wet	moitié.
	water	mois.
	not	oignon.*
ou, oû	fool	foule.
an, am	...	rampant.
en, em	...	en, tems (an).
	...	rien (in) (10).
	(*silent*)	aiment (11).
in, im, ain, aim, ein	...	fin, vain.
	...	faim, feint.
on, om	...	mon, nom.
	dull	monsieur.*
un, um	...	un parfum.

(1) The first sounds given in this Table to the letters and combinations of letters are their general import; the second and third sounds are exceptional. Those marked * are the only exceptions of that category.

(2) No combinations of vowels, significant of elemental sounds, are used in French besides those given in this column ; in other combinations each vowel preserves its special sound.

(3) *e* represents the sound *a*, when followed by *mm*, and in the words *nenni*, *hennir*, *solennité*, and their derivatives ; it has the sound of *e* in *met* when followed by any other two consonants, except in *ennui*, *ennoblir*, *enorgueillir* and their derivatives, in which *en* is nasal.

(4) *e* is silent at the end of words and when its omission should not leave three articulations together.

(5) *u* followed by *m* takes this sound in purely Latin words.

(6) *ai* has its general sound of *è* in the terminations of the imperfect (indicative) and conditional of verbs ; it is, by exception, sounded *é* in the first person of the preterite (indicative) and future of verbs, to establish, in speaking, a distinction between the former and the latter tenses.

(7) *ais* has this pronunciation in the verb *faire* alone.

(8) *eu* has the general sound of *e* when the following consonant is pronounced.

(9) *eu* is equivalent to *u* only in the verb *avoir*.

(10) *en* is generally pronounced like *in* when it is preceded by *i*, and in the words *hymen* and *examen*.

(11) The termination *ent* is silent, when it marks the third person plural in verbs.

ALPHABETICAL REPRESENTATION OF VOCAL SOUNDS IN ENGLISH.

THE sounds of the English vowels are expressed in the second column of this Table by French letters, because they are less variable in their import than those of the English language, in which there is not a vowel or combination of vowels, which could be considered as the special sign of a sound. Besides, the French containing all the English vocal elements, with the exception of *aw* and *th*, can be made to represent them. *See the preceding Table for the import of the French letters.*

Letters.	Vocal sounds.	Illustrations.
a	1. a	fat.
	2. å	father.
	3. e	inward.
	4. è (short)	any.
	5. ę	fate.
	6. i (short)	village.
	7. o (short)	quality.
	8. aw (*Engl.*)	fall.
	9. (*silent*)	carriage.
e	1. å	clerk.
	2. e	her.
	3. è	there.
	4. è (short)	set.
	5. ę	pianoforte.
	6. i	these.
	7. i (short)	women.
	8. o (short)	encore.
	9. j	hideous.
	10. (*silent*)	loved.
i	1. e	sir.
	2. è (short)	skirt.
	3. i	machine.
	4. i (short)	sin.
	5. åï	time.
	6. y (*consont.*)	onion.
	7. yäï	kind.
	8. ou	escritoir.
	9. (*silent*)	venison.
o	1. e	work.
	2. i	women.
	3. o	nor.
	4. o (short)	boddice.
	5. ô	no.
	6. ou	move.
	7. ou (short)	wolf.
	8. wi	chorister.
	9. wo	one.
	10. oou	compt (old spelling.)
	11. (*silent*)	bacon.
u	1. e	but.
	2. è (short)	bury.
	3. i (short)	busy.
	4. ou	truce.
	5. ou (short)	put.
	6. iou	tube.
	7. w	persuade.
	8. (*silent*)	build.

Letters.	Vocal sounds.	Illustrations.
y	1. e	myrtle.
	2. i	physician.
	3. i (short)	physic.
	4. aï	shy.
	5. y (*consont.*)	yet.
	6. (*silent*)	pray.
ai	1. a	plaid.
	2. è (short)	said.
	3. ę	pail.
	4. i	raisin
	5. i (short)	curtain.
	6. o (short)	Britain.
	7. åï	aisle.
	8. ay	naiad.
	9. ïè	again.
ao	1. ę	gaol.
	2. o	extraordinary.
	3. ô	Pharaoh.
	4. ao	aorta.
	5. éo	aorist.
	6. éô	Aonian.
au	1. a	laugh.
	2. å	draught.
	3. é	gauge.
	4. o	laurel.
	5. ô	hautboy.
	6. ou	beauty.
	7. é-e	Menelaus.
	8. aw (*Englsh.*)	taught.
	9. (*silent*)	Beauchamp.
ea	1. å	heart.
	2. e	heard.
	3. è (short)	head.
	4. ę	bear.
	5. i	hear.
	6. i (short)	guinea.
	7. ia	reaction.
	8. i-e	real.
	9. ié	creation.
ee	1. ę	ne'er.
	2. i	cheer.
	3. i (short)	coffee.
	4. i-e	freer.
	5. ïè	preeminent

Letters.	Vocal sounds.	Illustrations.
ei.	1. è (short)	heifer.
	2. é	veil.
	3. i	receive.
	4. i (short)	forfeit.
	5. âĭ	height.
	6. ĭĭ	reimburse.
	7. iy	plebeian.
eo.	1. e	surgeon.
	2. è (short)	leopard.
	3. i	people.
	4. o	George.
	5. ô	yeoman.
	6. ou	galleon.
	7. i-o	geography.
	8. i-ô	Creole.
	9. aou	MacLeod.
	10. iou	feodal.
	11. éo	pleonasm.
eu.	1. e	amateur.
	2. e (short)	Messieurs.
	3. ou	rheumatism
	4. iou	deuce.
	5. i-you	reunion.
ia.	1. e	special.
	2. é	associate.
	3. i (short)	carriage.
	4. ia	maniac.
	5. ĭ-e	aviary.
	6. ió	conciliate.
	7. úĭa	diamond.
	8. âĭ-e	dial.
	9. aĭé	hiatus.
ie.	1. e	brasier.
	2. è (short)	friend.
	3. i	grieve.
	4. i (short)	sieve.
	5. i-i.	sories.
	6. iè	twentieth.
	7. âĭ	die.
	8. âĭ-e	crier.
	9. yè	alien.
	10. áyé	variety.
io.	1. e	nation.
	2. i (short)	cushion
	3. ie	million.
	4. io	mediocrity.
io.	5. iô	folio.
	6. âïo	violent.
	7. aïô	violation.
oa.	1. e	cupboard.
	2. o	waistcoat.
	3. ô	coal.
	4. óa	coalition.
	5. oé	oasis.
	6. aw(*English.*)	broad.
oe.	1. e	does.
	2. i	œsophagus.
	3. ô	toe.
	4. ou	shoe.
	5. ô-e	goer.
	6. oè	coercion.
	7. óé	poesy.
	8. ôĭ	coeval.
	9. ou-e	doer.
oi.	1. e	tortoise.
	2. è (short)	connoisseur
	3. i	turkois.
	4. i (short)	chamois.
	5. ô	escritoir.
	6. oî	spoil.
	7. ôĭ	coincide.
	8. ou-ĭ	doing.
	9. wâ	memoir.
	10. waî	choir.
oo.	1. e	flood.
	2. ô	floor.
	3. ou	fool.
	4. ou (short)	foot.
	5. ôo	zoology.
	6. ôô	zoophyte.
ou.	1. e	labour.
	2. o	cough.
	3. ô	soul.
	4. ou	your.
	5. ou (short)	could.
	6. o-e	Antinous.
	7. âou	our.
	8. aw(*English.*)	bought.

Letters.	Vocal sounds.	Illustrations.
ow.	1. e	bellows.
	2. o	knowledge.
	3. ô	know.
	4. âou	now.
	5. ow	vowel.
ua.	1. a	guarantee.
	2. â	guard.
	3. âoua	Mantua.
	4. âou-e.	dual.
	5. wa	suavity.
	6. wâ	quarto.
	7. we	equal.
	8. wé	dissuade.
	9. wo	squabble.
	10. waw (*Engl*)	squall.
	11. ioué	actuate.
	12. (*silent*)	victualling.
ue.	1. e	conquer.
	2. è (short)	guest.
	3. ou	accrue.
	4. iou	due.
	5. ouè	fluent.
	6. iou-i.	duel.
	7. wè	conquest.
	8. wi	mansuetude
	9. (*silent*)	tongue.
ui.	1. è (short)	biscuit.
	2. i	palanquin.
	3. i (short)	circuit.
	4. ou	bruise.
	5. iou	suit
	6. we	quirk.
	7. wi	suite.
	8. wî	languid.
	9. waï	acquire.
	10. îâï	guide.

Other combinations of vowels, such as *aa, ae, aw, ay, ew, eau, eou, ey, ieu, iou, oy, uo,* represent, each, from four to six different sounds.

Rem.—The pronunciation of the illustrations in this Table is, for the most part, that of J. Walker's Dictionary.

(6) p. 127.

ON THE EVIL TENDENCY OF AN EXCLUSIVE AND INCAUTIOUS STUDY OF CLASSICAL LITERATURE.

"The advocates of these languages [Greek and Latin] always avoid the true view of this question; they urge the absolute merits of classical literature, which, though not to the extent, is cheerfully admitted,—but never consider what it excludes. I have readily conceded its value as an elegant accomplishment, excepting always where it is tainted with a vicious grossness, and an absurd and most anti-christian mythology. I grant, for I have enjoyed, the taste, the polish, the genius, the poetry, and the oratory of the classics; but I cannot shut my eyes to the gloomy fact that not above one in a hundred, whose years are

wasted in Latin and Greek, reap those advantages, or make even an approximation to them; that in after life, ninety-nine in a hundred lose the languages, and all their taste, poetry, and oratory, in one general oblivion . . . . Morality is placed upon a false basis of selfishness by the ancient classics; while religion is so utterly opposed to their whole character, that to find them approved and even taught by Christian ministers, can only be accounted for by the habit of not inquiring into long established customs. The talent, health, and life wasted on classical studies at college, under the selfish stimulus of college honors, has been often deplored; but the moral consequences are yet worse: there is a familiarity with selfishness and injustice, to which is given the name of patriotism, a disposition to think lightly of war, and an appetite for martial glory, arising from the lessons and intercourse of our public schools, which have a very injurious effect upon society; *so much* is not forgotten by the otherwise oblivious pupil. A different standard of morals and rule of right is, without inquiry by teachers, applied to the ancients and to the moderns, so that sensuality, selfishness, injustice, rapacity, cruelty, and crime, are not only excused to the former, but pressed upon the opening faculties of youth as the constituents of moral grandeur and practical virtue. All this recoils dreadfully upon society. Christianity itself is overborne by a spurious morality, and society continues selfish, sensual, and belligerent.

"Eloquence is a very wide term; it contains a great deal more in it than is generally supposed. For the application of language to the purpose of strict logical reasoning, splendid imagery, and fine poetry, as infused into eloquence, I should say you could not go to better models than the orators of antiquity. But, when we examine what are the sentiments that are conveyed even by their most splendid orations, we find that these are almost all of a selfish kind, that they tend to flatter and encourage national pride, and the other feelings of a mistaken patriotism, to exclude the bulk of mankind from equal privileges with a privileged few, and to foster feelings of enmity against all other nations but their own, with a very small sprinkling indeed of anything that we should call high-toned sentiment. I should, therefore, rather look to the orations of Chatham, of Burke, of Wilberforce, of Canning, and of more recent living orators, who deal with justice and mercy, which the ancients know not, with higher interests and juster views of human nature and human society, and who look abroad upon their fellow-creatures with an eye of benevolence. When I

look to their orations, I find in them a much more lofty, a much more genuine, a much more heart-improving eloquence than I have ever met with in the more classical, but less exaltedly moral effusions of Cicero and Demosthenes. This is felt by those who have listened to such preachers as Chalmers of Scotland and Channing of America, whose eloquence overpowers the feelings to a degree which the orations of ancient orators could not possibly effect."—JAMES SIMPSON, *Evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons.*

Archbishop Whately, in condemning the school recitation of the classics, observes, "Can people doubt that some effect is likely to be produced on a young and unformed mind, forwarder in passions than in reason by studying as an actor, and striving to deliver with effect the part of an accomplished debauchee? And this, too, such a character as Terence's poetical justice never fails to crown with success and applause! The foulest obscenity, such as would create disgust in any delicate mind, would probably be less likely to corrupt the principles than the more gentleman-like profligacy which is not merely represented, but recommended in Terence, and which approaches but too nearly to what the youth may find exemplified among the higher classes in this country."—"*Elements of Rhetoric.*"

"Let us suppose a truly Christian teacher to have been the tutor of Alexander, instead of Aristotle. Such a tutor would have utterly condemned the cruel, revengeful, and warlike spirit which breathes throughout this wonderful production [the Iliad]. He would, no doubt, have warmly inculcated the godlike virtues of humanity, forgiveness, and benevolence. And, if his pupil had been docile, we might reasonably have expected that, instead of unjustly invading the dominions of others, Alexander might have nobly employed his life in being an Alfred in his own, instead of inhumanly dragging the governor of a town, as he did, bound to his chariot, in imitation of Achilles; that he would have made him an illustrious instance of his clemency; and that, instead of making it the business of his whole existence to subdue and destroy his fellow-creatures, it would, on the contrary, have been the summit of his noble ambition to be hailed as the benefactor and father of mankind.

"We are confirmed in these views by the remarks of a profound original living writer: 'Who can tell,' says he, 'how much that

passion for war which, from the universality of its prevalence, might seem inseparable from the nature of man, may, in the civilised world, have been reinforced by the enthusiastic admiration with which young men have read Homer and similar poets, whose genius transforms what is, and ought always to appear purely horrid, into an aspect of grandeur? Yet the reader of Homer will find the mightiest strain of poetry employed to represent ferocious courage; and those who do not possess it as worthy of their fate—to be trodden into the dust. He will be taught,—at least it will not be the fault of the poet if he be not taught,—to forgive a heroic spirit for finding the sweetest luxury in insulting dying pangs, and imagining the tears and despair of distant parents and wives. He will be incessantly called on to worship revenge, the real divinity of the Iliad, in comparison of which the thunderer of Olympus is but a despicable pretender to power. He will be taught that the most envious and glorious life is that to which the greatest number of other lives are made a sacrifice; and that it is noble in a hero to prefer even a short life, attended by this felicity, to a long one, which should permit a longer life also to others.' "—*The Schol. Quart. Rev.* No. II.

"Voyez ce qui se passe dans nos collèges! interrogez ces jeunes gens, qui bientôt seront appelés à jouer un rôle dans la société humaine; leur esprit n'est qu'un chaos où se heurtent les opinions grecques et romaines. La domination héroïque des anciennes républiques les touche bien plus que la grandeur morale de la république chrétienne. Ils regrettent la puissance de conquérir le monde; ils regrettent la barbarie, et croient regretter la vertu.

"Je me rappelle encore avec étonnement les pensées étranges dont mes professeurs meublaient mon intelligence et dépravaient mon âme. Ils avaient réussi à éteindre en moi jusqu'au sentiment de la justice, qui est innée dans l'homme. Ainsi j'étais enchanté de la conquête de la Gaule par César, et la prise de Rome par les Gaulois me faisait frissonner d'indignation. Tout ennemi des Romains était mon ennemi .... Avais-je des larmes pour des populations entières massacrées ou vendues à l'encan? Non, je n'avais que des cris d'admiration pour les bourreaux! surtout je méprisais profondément les affranchis, et je croyais les esclaves d'une espèce inférieure à leurs tyrans .... J'aurais douté de la Providence, si j'avais vu Spartacus maître de Rome, ou les Ilotes, maîtres de Sparte, reconquérir leurs titres d'hommes."—AIMÉ-MARTIN.—"*Réflexions sur l'Hist. Rom. de Ch. Coux.*"

"Qu'étaient-ils donc, après tout, ces Romains, que l'on vante avec tant d'emphase, que l'on cite continuellement pour modèles, que l'on propose sans cesse à l'adoration de l'enfance? Un peuple grossier, barbare, féroce, qui compte dans son histoire plus de nuits de désastres et de crimes, que de jours de gloire et de vertus; qui, de tous les arts, n'a connu que celui de tuer et de piller; qui nous a laissé, il est vrai, quelques monuments de littérature; mais par combien de flots de sang, par combien de torrents de larmes, l'univers alors n'a-t-il pas payé ce don fait à la postérité? Le nom de Français, n'est-il donc pas assez beau pour que nous instruisions de bonne heure nos enfants à le chérir, de l'honorer? N'avons-nous pas assez expié le frivole honneur à nous faire les singes de l'antiquité, pour renoncer désormais à cette funeste et déplorable manie? Quand le monstre hideux de la terreur couvrait la France entière de ses ailes funèbres et sanglantes, n'a-t-on pas vu les plus forcenés jacobins s'affubler des noms romains, des *Marius*, des *Brutus*, des *Scævola*, et coiffés du bonnet de ces prétendus patriarches de la liberté, leurs dignes patrons, exploiter la révolution et ses fureurs?"—F. G. POTTIER, "*Observations sur les Inconvéniens du Système Actuel*," &c.

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(7) p. 147.

ON THE INSUFFICIENCY AND UNREASONABLE LENGTH OF CLASSICAL STUDIES.

To our observations and quotations in the text we will add the following remarks, from different authors, on the exclusiveness, insufficiency, and unreasonable length of classical studies, which will clear us from all reproach of exaggeration:—

"Viewed as a means of imparting valuable knowledge, of imparting much knowledge, or of training and invigorating the intellectual faculties, the Eton system of education must be admitted to fail in every essential point... Can any parent, who is anxious for the welfare of his children, read and believe the account which we have given, and say that the education of Eton is the best which these islands afford? Is he willing that his son should abandon all knowledge but that of the Greek and Latin languages; that, when young and weak, he should be exposed to the unchecked tyranny of older boys; when grown stronger, that his evil passions should not only not be repressed, but

heightened and inflamed by a regulation connived at, if not approved, by the governors of the school? that after a long and expensive residence, his son should be returned to his hands avowedly ignorant, so far as the school instruction is concerned, of modern languages, literature, and history."

Edinb. Rev., No. CI.

"The defects of the system of education adopted at Westminster School seem to us rather negative than positive. It is not that boys learn what is mischievous, but that they do not learn what is good. There are indeed many positive errors both in the modes of instruction and moral discipline: nevertheless, the faults of omission preponderate greatly over those of commission. To estimate the effects of moral discipline at a school is not easy: but the test of intellectual advancement is simple; we need only ask, how much knowledge has a youth of seventeen gained by five or six years' residence at Westminster? A little divinity, a little ancient geography, a knowledge of the elements of geometry, a fair knowledge of Latin, an imperfect knowledge of Greek, and a slight smattering of ancient history, and, beyond this, nothing. With the single exception of religion, he is wholly ignorant of those things which it is most important that he should know—of the history of his own country, of the history of foreign countries, of modern languages. At Eton, indeed, a pretence is kept up of teaching mathematics and the modern languages; but nothing more than a pretence, as every one acquainted with that school, and even the author of a late defence of Eton, notwithstanding the parade of assertion which he makes on this point, must well know."—*Edinb. Rev.*, No. CV.

"From six or eight till sixteen or seventeen, nine or ten months in every precious year of youth are occupied, for six or eight hours of every day, in learning, or trying to learn, a little Latin or less Greek; in attempting, in fact, not to read and understand the matter of a classical author, to know the history, the poetry, the philosophy, the policy, the manners, and the opinions of Greece and Rome, but the grammar, the syntax, the parsing, the quantities, and the accents; not in learning to write and speak the languages, but in getting by wrote a few scraps of poetry, to be again forgotten, and in fabricating nonsense, or sense verses, it is indifferent which. In ten years of this labour, privation, punishment, slavery, and expense, what is gained even

of this useless trash? Nothing. Let the man who can now write and speak Latin; let him who can read the poets, philosophers, and historians, with the facility and pleasure with which he reads Hume and Milton, or even Boileau and Tasso, answer whether he acquired these powers at school, or whether he is not self-educated. If all this had been learned, it would be useless; but even this useless matter is not acquired. . . . .

"There is much obscurity and dispute comprised in these terms [literature and taste]—many fallacies dependent on them. But the great fallacy of all is in the term *learning*. Learning, a learned man, a scholar: these are the words that blind us, and maintain in folly what was laid in wisdom. Once, Greek and Latin were the only learning, words the only sciences. The unhappy term remains; the country of England still considers syntax and quantity as learning, and the consequences are obvious. When nonsense verses shall have taken their appropriate place with charades and logogryphs; when politics, laws, economy, morals, mathematics, mechanics, chemistry, shall be dignified with the term "*learning*," then will Britain, and Europe with it, see that revolution in its education and its creeds, to produce which we trust we are not writing on dead leaves, and to the winds. . . . .

"A language that can be read is nevertheless worth something; but a language that can be spoken as well as read, has at least one value more. If a language which we want every day as a means of intercourse is a desirable acquisition, a language which includes a thousand authors ought also to be more valuable than the one which contains a hundred; and if, therefore, language is an exercise of the faculties, it is more than evident that the one which can be spoken, the one in which we can read, through a long life, is the best worth cultivating, because we gain two ends by one purchase."—*Westm. Rev.*, Vol. 4., "*Present System of Education.*"

"We observe with what delight a child beholds light, colours flowers, fruit, and every new object that meets his eye; and we all know that, before his judgment be permitted to interfere, for many years he feels, or rather suffers, a thirst for information which is almost insatiable. . . . .

"Now with their minds in this pure, healthy, voracious state, the sons of all our noblest families, and of the most estimable people in the country, are, after certain preparations, eventually sent to those slaughter-houses of the understanding, our public

schools, where, weaned from the charms of the living world, they are nailed to the study of the dead languages; like galley-slaves, they are chained to these oars, and are actually flogged if they neglect to labour. Instead of imbibing knowledge suited to their youthful age, they are made to learn the names of Actæon's hounds—to study the life of Alexander's horse—to know the fate of Alcibiades' dog. . . . . The poor boy, at last, "gets," as it is termed, "into Ovid," where he is made to study everything which human ingenuity could invent to sully, degrade, and ruin the mind of a young person. The Almighty Creator of the Universe is caricatured by a set of grotesque personages termed gods and goddesses, so grossly sensual, so inordinately licentious, that were they to-day to appear in London, before sunset they would probably be, every one of them, where they ought to be—at the treadmill. The poor boy, however, must pore over all their amours, natural and unnatural; he must learn the birth, parentage, and education of each, with the biography of their offspring, earthly as well as unearthly. He must study love-letters from the heavens to the earth, and metamorphoses which have almost all some low, impure object. The only geography he learns is 'the world known to the ancients.' Although a member of the first maritime nation on the globe, he learns no nautical science but that possessed by people who scarcely dared to leave their shores; all his knowledge of military life is that childish picture of it which might fairly be entitled, 'war without gunpowder.' But even the little which on those subjects he does learn is so mixed up with fable, that his mind gets puzzled and debilitated to such a degree, that he becomes actually unable to distinguish truth from falsehood; and when he reads that Hannibal melted the Alps with vinegar, he does not know whether it be really true or not.

"In this degraded state, with the energy and curiosity of their young minds blunted, actually nauseating the intellectual food which they had once so naturally desired, a whole batch of boys, at the age of about fourteen, are released from their schools to go on board men-of-war, where they are to strive to become the heroes of their day. They sail from their country ignorant of almost everything that has happened to it since the days of the Romans. Having been obliged to look upon all phenomena of nature, as well as the mysteries of art, without explanation, their curiosity for information on such subjects has subsided. They lean against the capstan, but know nothing of its power;—they are surrounded

by mechanical contrivances of every sort, but understand them no more than they do the stars in the firmament. They steer from one country to another, ignorant of the customs, manners, prejudices, or languages of any; they know nothing of the effect of climate; it requires almost a fever to drive them from the sun: in fact, they possess no practical knowledge."—SIR FRANCIS HEAD, "*Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau.*"

"The learned languages," says Mr. Wyse, "are still considered by many, emphatically, education. To teach them, and to teach little else, was a portion of the wisdom of our ancestors; but, though wisdom in them, it does not follow it is such in us. With them it was knowledge, not for ornament, but use. It was the instrument of *action*, as well as of *thought*. Law, Diplomacy, Medicine, Religion, all was Latin: a man who was no 'Latiner,' was a mere villein in education: he was deemed unfit in civil life for any situation destined for the 'ingenuous' and free. But to insist on it at present, but, above all, as the only thing necessary, and to the sacrifice of many other things really so, is a folly of which our ancestors could not have been guilty. . . .

"The system of Latin and Greek teaching may sin in two particulars—in being applied to pupils who have no possible use for such instruction, and, secondly, in consigning a 'triste et stérile enfance,' as it really is, under such absurd discipline, for years together to this one study. The learned languages should be taught, to such only as require them; and taught so as not to exclude other more important matters; and finally, they should be veritably and decidedly taught: that is, the pupil should receive for his time and labour something more than the mongrel, water-gruel, dictionary knowledge with which, after an apprenticeship worse than Jacob's, he is now generally sent forth.

"It may be consoling to a parent's vanity to put his boy into Latin and breeches at the same time; but one evidence of his virile dignity ought, in all reason, to suffice. Twelve, or even later, is quite time, if he intends to learn the language as well as the grammar. He will then have made some real progress in the study of the mother-tongue (the tongue which he must use, whether he be young or old, high or low, Latiner or no Latiner), and understand what language and what learning mean. His time and labour will be abridged and usefully employed; in a short period he will do much, and he will do it well."

In another place he says: "Our elementary schools are mere

machines à lettres; our middle classes, in many instances, have not the advantage of much better *grinding*, and our upper are laboriously miseducated—swathed from their childhood up with so many and such well-devised absurdities, that it is not singular they should present, in after-life, so many incurable cases of mental rickets and distractions. Many of these vices are the slough of preceding generations. The mistake, which inadvertence and ignorance might first have caused, has been cherished for its continuance, and, *because* it has continued, become venerable." —"*Education Reform.*"

"Pendant dix ans l'étude progressive du latin fait le fond de l'instruction, et c'est sur ce fond qu'on répand les principes généraux de la grammaire et quelques connaissances de géographie et d'histoire. Sous quel point de vue une langue doit-elle donc être considérée dans une éducation générale? Ne suffit-il pas de mettre les élèves en état de comprendre les livres vraiment utiles écrits dans cette langue? Peut-on regarder la connaissance approfondie d'un idiôme étranger comme une de ces connaissances générales que tout homme éclairé, tout citoyen qui se destine aux emplois de la société les plus importants, ne puisse ignorer? Par quel singulier privilège, lorsque le tems destiné pour l'instruction, lorsque l'objet même de l'enseignement force de se borner dans tous les genres à des connaissances élémentaires, et de laisser ensuite le goût des jeunes gens se porter librement vers celles qu' ils veulent cultiver, le latin seul serait-il l' objet d'une étude plus étendue? Serait-ce qu'on le considère comme la langue générale des savants? Mais il perd tous les jours de cet avantage, et une connaissance élémentaire du latin suffit pour lire leurs livres; et puis toutes les vérités que renferment ces livres, et les ouvrages les plus importants de science, de philosophie ou de politique, existent dans des traductions, et souvent mieux développées, et réunies à des vérités nouvelles dans des livres écrits en langues vulgaires. La lecture des originaux n'est vraiment utile qu' à ceux dont l'objet n'est pas l'étude de la science même, mais celle de son histoire. Enfin, puisqu'il faut tout dire, puisque tous les préjugés doivent aujourd'hui disparaître, l'étude longue, approfondie des langues anciennes, étude qui nécessiterait la lecture de tous les livres qu'ils nous ont laissés, serait peut-être plus nuisible qu'utile. Nous cherchons dans l'éducation à faire connaître des vérités, et ces livres sont remplis d'erreurs; nous cherchons à former la

raison, et ces livres peuvent l'égarer. Nous avons tellement devancé les anciens dans la route de la vérité, qu'il faut avoir sa raison déjà toute armée pour que ces précieuses dépouilles puissent l'enrichir sans la corrompre . . . "—CONDORCET, "*Rapport sur l'Education Nationale*," 1792.

"On nous dit qu'il est impossible de devenir poète, orateur, écrivain, &c., sans avoir consumé les plus belles années de sa vie sur des rudiments, des dictionnaires et des traités de versification latine. C'est par là seulement qu'on peut être réputé homme de sens, d'esprit et de goût. Mais alors, tous les professeurs de latin et de grec qui vieillissent dans ce qu'on appelle si judicieusement les humanités, devraient se distinguer généralement par l'élégance et la pureté du style, par les formes riches et gracieuses de l'élocution ; or, le plus souvent il arrive que les hommes les plus étrangers peut-être à l'éloquence et à la poésie, sont ceux qui sont chargés officiellement d'en transmettre les secrets, tandisque, au contraire, Vauvenargues, Rousseau, Bernardin de St. Pierre, Béranger et tant d'autres n'ont jamais étudié le latin ni le grec ! Quant à Corneille, Racine, Molière, Boileau, Bossuet, &c., si l'on attribuait aux études classiques la supériorité de leurs talents, je répliquerais avec une conviction fondée sur des récits du tems, qu'ils se sont formés au contraire eux-mêmes, comme par miracle, malgré les détestables études qu'on leur a fait faire, et que, à l'exemple de Descartes, ils ont rejeté toutes les leçons du collège pour refaire eux-mêmes toute leur éducation."—N. J. MORAND, "*Tribune de l'Enseignement.*"

"Nous passons notre enfance à nous fatiguer pour ne rien apprendre, ou pour n'apprendre que des choses inutiles ; et nous sommes condamnés à attendre l'âge viril pour nous instruire réellement. De tant d'hommes qui se sont distingués depuis le renouvellement des lettres, y en a-t-il un seul qui n'ait pas été dans la nécessité de recommencer ses études sur un nouveau plan ? Si c'est hors des écoles publiques que nous devons nous instruire, à quoi servent-elles donc ?" — CONDILLAC, "*Logique Complète.*"

"En dépit de la raison et de l'expérience, la jeunesse la plus distinguée de l'Europe doit donc être condamnée à passer huit ou dix années du tems le plus précieux à deviner et à inventer du latin, sans pouvoir parvenir à lire en entier, sans une peine

infinie, un livre quelconque écrit dans cette langue. Non, ceux mêmes qui l'enseignement dans l'université ne le savent pas à ce degré. Quand on considère que le latin, si imparfaitement appris par ceux qui réussissent le mieux, est néanmoins le seul objet sérieux des études dans les collèges, on ne peut que gémir sur le misérable résultat de tant de peines, de tems et de dépenses. Au reste, depuis que les jeunes gens consument à feuilleter des dictionnaires le tems qu'ils passent dans les collèges, n'est-il pas malheureusement constant que la plupart en sortent avec l'horreur du travail, sans compter que, comme l'ont témoigné tant d'illustres personnages qui ont le mieux connu et apprécié le résultat des études, ils n'y ont appris même ni grec ni latin?"—BIG. D'HARCOURT, "*De la Manière d'Enseigner les Humanités*," 1819.

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ON BRITISH UNIVERSITIES.

"The present universities of Europe were originally, the greater part of them, ecclesiastical corporations instituted for the education of churchmen. . . . . What was taught in the greater part of those universities was suitable to the end of their institution, either theology or something that was merely preparatory to theology.

"When Christianity was first established by law, a corrupted Latin had become the common language of all the western parts of Europe. The service of the Church accordingly, and the translation of the Bible, which was read in churches, were both in that corrupted Latin; that is, in the common language of the country. After the irruption of the barbarous nations who overturned the Roman Empire, Latin gradually ceased to be the language of any part of Europe. But the reverence of the people naturally preserves the established forms and ceremonies of religion, long after the circumstances which first introduced them and rendered them reasonable are no more. Though Latin, therefore, was no longer understood anywhere by the great body of the people, the whole service of the Church still continued to be performed in that language. Two different languages were thus established in Europe, in the same manner as in ancient Egypt;

a language of the priests, and a language of the people ; a sacred and a profane ; a learned and an unlearned language. But it was necessary that the priests should understand something of that sacred and learned language in which they were to officiate ; and the study of the Latin language, therefore, made from the beginning an essential part of university education. . . . . Universities are the sanctuaries in which exploded systems and obsolete prejudices found shelter and protection, after they had been hunted out of every corner of the globe."—ADAM SMITH, "*Wealth of Nations.*"

George Ensor, after having pointed out some of the defects and deficiencies of the British universities, concludes thus: "Shall these conventicles be called universities, which, as defined by Johnson, mean 'schools where all the arts and faculties are taught?' So little do they deserve this general character, that a whole university, fellows and students, could scarcely afford one person fitted to fill, with credit, any civil situation. And this must be so, as scarcely any place can afford fewer opportunities of teaching the business of life."—"*On National Education.*"

"The schools of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in a dark age of false and barbarous science ; and they are still stained with the vices of their origin. Their primitive discipline was adapted to the education of priests and monks ; and the government still remains in the hands of the clergy, an order of men whose manners are remote from the world, and whose eyes are dazzled by the light of philosophy. The legal incorporation of these societies by the charters of popes and kings had given them a monopoly of the public instruction ; and the spirit of monopolists is narrow, lazy, and oppressive : their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists ; and the new improvements so eagerly grasped by the competition of freedom, are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations, above the fear of a rival, and below the confession of an error. We may scarcely hope that any reformation will be a voluntary act ; and so deeply are they rooted in law and prejudice, that even the omnipotence of Parliament would shrink from an inquiry into the state and abuses of the two universities."—ED. GIBBON, "*Memoirs of my Life and Writings.*"

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STANDARD WORKS ON DOMESTIC EDUCATION FOR THE USE OF PARENTS.

Among the works which may be read by parents, and especially by mothers anxious to fulfil the duties imposed on them by Providence and by society, we would recommend the following:—

J. LOCKE.—Thoughts on Education.

MISS EDGEWORTH.—Practical Education.

R. L. EDGEWORTH.—Essays on Professional Education.

TAYLOR.—Home Education.

LORD KAMES.—Hints upon Education—Culture of the Heart.

GOODRICH.—Fireside Education.

MRS. CHILD.—Mother's Book.

Woman's Mission. Translated from Aimé-Martin.

W. E. CHANNING.—Self-Culture.

J. J. ROUSSEAU.—Emile, ou de l'Education.

MME. DE GENLIS.—Adèle et Théodore, ou Lettres sur l'Education.

AIMÉ-MARTIN.—Education des Mères de Famille.

MME. NECKER DE SAUSSURE.—Education Progressive.

MME. GUIZOT.—Lettres de Famille.

MME. DE RÉMUSAT.—Essai sur l'Education des Femmes.

MME. CAMPAN.—De l'Education.

M. A. JULLIEN.—Essai Général d'Education.

FÉNÉLON.—De l'Education des Filles.

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STANDARD WORKS ON PUBLIC INSTRUCTION FOR THE USE OF TEACHERS.

We have endeavoured, throughout this work, to point out to the professor of languages, how he can best perform the task which devolves on him, and thus render his office truly useful and honourable. Educators and instructors, in general, will find

valuable hints on the best modes of fulfilling their duties, in the various works on education which we have had occasion to name, and more particularly in the following:—

J. LALOR.—On the Expediency and Means of Elevating the Profession of the Educator in Public Estimation—The Educator (Prize Essays.)

THOS. WYSE.—Education Reform.

I. ABBOTT.—The Teacher, or Moral Influences in the Instruction of the Young.

GEO. JARDINE.—Outlines of Philosophical Education.

JAS. PILLANS.—Principles of Elementary Teaching.

DEGÉRANDO.—Cours Normal des Instituteurs Primaires.

RENDU FILS.—Cours de Pédagogie.

MATTER.—Manuel de l'Instituteur, ou Principes Génér. de Pédagogie.

MATTER.—Le Visiteur des Ecoles.

CH. ROLLIN.—Traité des Etudes.

I. WILLM.—Essai sur l'Education du Peuple.

NIEMEYER.—Principes d'Education, traduit par Lochmann.

LAURENT DE JUSSIEU.—Exposé Analytique des Méthodes de l'Abbé Gaultier.

M. A. JULLIEN.—Exposé de la Méthode d'Education de Pestalozzi.

A. DURIETZ.—Traité complet de la Méthode Jacotot.

V. COUSIN.—Rapports sur l'Etat de l'Instruction en Allemagne.

F. M. NAVILLE.—De l'Education Publique.

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WORKS WHICH TREAT OF THE STUDY OF LANGUAGES.

The reader desirous of making himself acquainted with the various methods of learning languages which have appeared in England and in France, will find here a list of those which have come to our knowledge. We have not included in this list any of the innumerable Grammars, Exercise-books, Dialogues, Vocabularies, and other school books, which, under the comprehensive, but deceitful title of "Method," contain only exercises or

mnemonic lessons on special and often very limited departments of a foreign language :—

ROGER ASCHAM.—Schoolmaster. 1571.

J. MILTON.—Of Education : to Master S. Hartlib. 1650.

J. LOCKE.—Thoughts on Education. 1690.

J. P. PHILIPS.—A Compendious Way of Teaching Ancient and Modern Languages. 1728.

VICES. KNOX.—Liberal Education. 1781.

JAS. BEATTIE.—Essay on the Utility of Classical Learning. 1783.

GEO. CHAPMAN.—A Treatise on Education. 1792.

JN. CLARKE.—A Dissertation upon the Usefulness of Translation of Classical Authors. Fourteenth Edition. 1793.

ARTH. CLIFFORD.—New Method of Teaching and Learning Languages. 1814.

A. W. LIGHT.—Easy Method of Teaching Languages.

M. WEISS.—The Art of Learning Languages Restored to its Natural Principles, translated by M. J. SULLIVAN. 1827.

N. G. DUFIEF.—Introduction to Nature displayed in her mode of Teaching Language to Man. 1818.

Plans for the Liberal Instruction of Boys in Large Numbers, as practised at Hazlewood School. 1827.

A. A. GALIANO.—Introductory Lecture on the Study of Spanish. 1829.

L. MUHLENFELS.—Introductory Lecture on the Study of German. 1829.

JUST. BRENAN.—Utility of Latin Discussed. 1830.

G. LONG.—Observations on the Study of Latin and Greek. Introductory Lecture. 1830.

JAS. HAMILTON.—The History, Principles, &c., of the Hamiltonian System. 1831.

SPURZHEIM.—View of the Elementary Principles of Education. 1832.

THOS. WYSE.—Education Reform. 1836.

ALEX. ALLEN.—On Teaching Greek (Central Society of Education). 1837.

A. VIEUSSEUX.—On the Teaching of the Italian Language. Quarterly Journal, No. 12.

GEO. COMBE.—Lectures on Popular Education. 1837.

An Essay on a System of Classical Instruction, combining the methods of Locke, Milton, Ascham, &c. Taylor & Walton. 1837.

G. LONG.—What are the Advantages of a Study of Antiquity at the Present Time (Central Society of Education). 1839.

W. SEWELL.—Essay on the Study of Dead Languages.

F. DE PORQUET.—The Fenwickian System, or Guide for Teaching and Learning French. 1839.

C. LE VERT.—A General and Practical System of Teaching and Learning Languages. 1842.

JAMES PILLANS.—Rationale of School Discipline. 1852.

J. S. BLACKIE.—On the Studying and Teaching of Languages. 1852.

Quarterly Journal of Education.

American Annals of Education.

The Scholastic Journal and Magazine of Education.

The Scholastic Quarterly Review.

CL. LANCELOT.—Méthodes Latine et Grecque. 1655.

ANT. ARNAULD.—Mémoire sur le Règlement des Etudes. 41e vol. 1660—1690.

TAN. LEFÈVRE.—Méthode pour Apprendre les Humanités. 1672.

THOMASSIN.—Méthode d'Etudier les Langues. 1699.

C. C. DUMARSAIS.—Exposition d'une Méthode Raisonnée pour Apprendre le Latin. 1722.

CH. ROLLIN.—Traité des Etudes. 1730.

N. PLUCHE.—Mécanique des Langues et l'Art de les Enseigner. 1751.

P. CHOMPRÉ.—Manière d'Enseigner ou d'Etudier la Langue Latine. 1757.

L. R. LA CHÂLOTAIS.—Essai d'Education Nationale. 1763.

L. B. GUYTON DE MORVEAU.—Mémoire sur l'Education Publique. 1764.

MAUBERT DE GOUVET.—Le Temps Perdu, ou les Ecoles Publiques. 1765.

B. LAMI.—Entretiens sur les Sciences et sur la Manière d'Etudier. 1768.

C. F. L. RADONVILLIERS.—De la Manière d'Apprendre les Langues. 1768.

C. LE BATTEUX.—Cours d'Etude de l'Ecole Royale Militaire. 1777.

NS. BEAUZÉE.—Méthode pour Apprendre les Langues. Encyclopédie Méthodique. 1780.

CL. FLEURY.—Traité du Choix des Etudes. 1784.

A. C. CHAVANNES.—Essai sur l'Education Intellectuelle. 1787.

D. GOULIN.—De la Traduction comme Moyen d'Apprendre une Langue. 1788.

J. A. MICHEL.—Les vrais Principes de l'Art de Traduire. Extraits des meilleurs auteurs. 1797.

A. MAUGARD.—Discours sur l'Utilité de la Langue Latine et sur la Manière la plus Simple de l'Enseigner. 1808.

R. A. SICARD.—Théorie des Signes, ou Introduction à l'Etude des Langues. 1808.

P. A. LEMARE.—Manière d'Apprendre les Langues. 1817.

A. ANAYA.—Discours sur la Manière d'Apprendre les Langues Vivantes. 1818.

RIGAULT D'HARCOURT.—De la Manière d'Enseigner les Humanités. 1819.

P. H. SUZANNE.—Traité d'Education Publique et Privée. 1820.

N. J. MORAND.—Tribune de l'Enseignement.

C. F. VOLNEY.—Discours sur l'Etude Philosophique des Langues. Seconde Edition. 1820.

F. G. POTTIER.—Observations sur les Inconvéniens du Système Actuel. 1821.

DE LASTEYRIE.—L'Enseignement Mutuel Appliqué aux Langues. 1819—1825.

Ditto. Méthode Naturelle de l'Enseignement des Langues. 1825.

MÉRIAN.—Principes de l'Etude Comparative des Langues. 1828.

A. HOFFMAN.—Les Vices de l'Education Publique—Considérations sur l'Etude des Langues. 1832.

LAURENT DE JUSSIEU.—Exposé Analytique des Méthodes de l'Abbé Gaultier. 1833.

Expérience d'un Père sur l'Enseignement du Latin. 1835.

DESNEUFBOURGS.—Le Guide du Professeur, ou Observations sur la Manière d'Enseigner les Humanités. 1837.

H. A. NIEMEYER.—Principes d'Education. Traduit par Lochmann. 1837.

J. E. BOULET.—De l'Enseignement Secondaire en France. 1839.

J. JACOTOT.—Enseignement Universel—Langue Etrangère. 1841.

M. A. JULLIEN.—Exposé de la Méthode d'Education de Pestalozzi. 1842.

T. ROBERTSON.—Nouveau Cours. 1841.

GASC.—Le Livre des Pères de Famille et des Instituteurs. 1843.

J. P. SALIVES.—De l'Enseignement des Langues dans les Classes Elémentaires. 1844.

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ON THE UNFITNESS OF CLASSICAL STUDIES FOR CHILDHOOD.

Although the unfitness of classical studies for childhood is obvious, and scarcely needs any further corroboration, we cannot forbear stating the evidence given on this subject before a Committee of the House of Commons by a most competent judge, Dr. J. H. Jerrard, formerly a classical lecturer at the University of Cambridge, and since Principal of Bristol College.

"I am strongly opposed," he says, "to what I conceive to be a most false application of a true principle, namely, making children learn Latin at a very early period of life, particularly in the way in which it is ordinarily taught, through the medium of technical grammar. This, instead of naturally and healthfully exercising the verbal memory of a child, tends to overload it with a weight of barbarous terms, all explanations of which imply a power of abstraction quite beyond his years. I have known several very intelligent boys, who commenced Latin at seven years of age, and who made scarcely any progress for the first two or three years, having had for a long time scarcely any conception of what they were about; and many persons, who have proved themselves to be possessed of great abilities, have informed me that they looked back actually with horror at the intellectual drudgery of their early school-boy days; and that they imbibed at that time a disgust of all knowledge, which they afterwards found it very hard to get over, in consequence of being forced to work at what they could not comprehend. An eminent philosopher, who, even before he went to school, had displayed a remarkable turn for observing natural objects and for inquiring into the causes of what he observed, has frequently told me in what a bewildered state of mind at seven years of age, he wandered up and down the cases of the (so-called) Latin article, striving in vain to find out what 'was meant by,' and, 'what was the use of' nominative *hic, hæc, hoc;* genitive *hujus, hujus, hujus,* &c.; and how sadly he feels that his faculties were benumbed, and no doubt permanently injured by the Procrustean process to which they were subjected, not to mention the stores of natural knowledge which would have been most delightful to him at the time, and most valuable in after life, from which he was for many years hopelessly cut off. But my experience at Bristol College has convinced me, that even looking no further

than to the mere acquisition of the learned languages, that object may be best attained by deferring the commencement of them till at least ten years of age. Such of my pupils as had not begun till then, have almost uniformly overtaken, or even passed, at fourteen or fifteen, those who had started at seven. I must say that in fixing upon ten as the earliest age at which they can commence with us, I am by no means convinced in my own mind that it is best for them to begin so young; but I have drawn the line there, in order to meet, as far as I could, the popular prejudice upon this subject. Judging from several instances which have come under my observation, I am strongly inclined to believe that twelve or even fourteen would be a better period for commencing Latin."—*Report of Evidence.*

Mr. James Simpson, in his evidence before the same Committee, after having expressed similar opinions with those of Dr. Jerrard on the unfitness of classical studies for children, comes to the conclusion that they should be postponed until after the age of fourteen, and that, at this period, a couple of years would suffice to learn Latin and Greek. In his "Philosophy of Education," he says, "The living languages will be more rapidly acquired after fourteen than before it. This has been observed in English youths who have been educated on the continent, where both periods have been tried. Judicious teachers who have tried the experiment have declared in favour of the more advanced age for the study of Latin and Greek."

Professor Blackie, in a lecture lately delivered in the Marischal College of Aberdeen, observes, "A young man of sixteen with fair talents, will learn more of a foreign language in three months than a mere child in twice as many years .... Persons are often sent to study the classical languages and to read the works of the highest classics, at an age when it is impossible even for clever boys—not to mention the slow majority—to read them with intelligence and sympathy. Here lies the great defect of the Scottish system of classical education."—*On the Studying and Teaching of Languages.*

"On sera surpris que je compte l'étude des langues au nombre des inutilités de l'éducation; mais on se souviendra que je ne parle ici que des études du premier âge; et, quoiqu'on en puisse

dire, je ne crois pas que jusqu'à l'âge de douze ou quinze ans nul enfant, les prodiges à part, ait jamais vraiment appris deux langues."—J. J. ROUSSEAU. *Emile*, Liv. ii.

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OF VOCAL MUSIC IN SCHOOLS.

"S'il est reconnu qu'on peut enseigner à lire et à écrire, sans faire de tous les enfants des savants et des gens de lettres ex-professo, on concevra qu'il soit possible de laisser exercer les enfants au chant et à la musique sans en faire pour cela des artistes et des virtuoses.

"Qu'il me soit permis de demander si dans les ateliers de nos villes, si au travers des champs, nous ne rencontrons pas chaque jour des ouvriers, des laboureurs qui, au milieu de leurs pénibles et monotones travaux, chantent aussi, et qui, loin de négliger leur ouvrage, le font, en chantant, avec plus d'ardeur et de gaieté. Ils ne rêvent point pour cela ni aux concerts ni à l'opéra ; mais au lieu de retours sombres, et amers peut-être, sur la dureté de leur condition, ils sentent soulager le poids de leurs fatigues. Ces simples accords sont comme une fleur semée dans les sillons de la vie humaine.

"La musique, qui, aux yeux de quelques-uns, n'est que le délassement du riche, est un utile auxiliaire pour les efforts d'une vie laborieuse. Vous avez sagement introduit dans les écoles le dessin linéaire, comme un exercice utile pour donner de la précision à l'œil et à la main. Ne serait-il pas permis de penser qu'un peu de chant en serait le complément naturel, et concourrait au même but ? Ce serait presque une portion essentielle de l'éducation physique, celle qui forme les organes des sens.

"Je ne dirai point tout l'avantage qu'on en pourrait tirer dans les cérémonies religieuses et dans une foule d'autres circonstances; je ne ferai point sentir avec quelle utilité ils pourraient, dans les heures de repos, remplacer des plaisirs souvent funestes à la santé et aux bonnes mœurs. Voyez du moins comme de semblables exercices s'allieraient naturellement à ceux qui se succèdent dans nos écoles. Je suppose qu'ils ouvriraient chaque classe du matin et du soir et qu'ils la termineraient aussi. A l'ouverture ils accroîtraient encore l'hilarité qu'on remarque déjà chez nos élèves, garantiraient leur assiduité par l'attrait du plaisir,

porteraient la sérénité dans ces jeunes têtes, inspireraient les dispositions les plus favorables pour cette suite d'actions et de mouvemens qui doivent se développer avec ordre, harmonie et ensemble. A la fin de la classe ils seraient une récompense et un délassement.

"Et lors même qu'ils ne contribueraient qu'à rendre nos enfants heureux, j'avoue que ce motif serait d'un grand poids à mes yeux. *Enfance* et *bonheur* sont deux choses qui vont si bien ensemble ! Le bonheur dans le jeune âge est souvent une semence pour les bonnes qualités dans l'âge mur.

"J'ose le croire, les chants de ces innocentes créatures seront des bénédictions pour vous ; en réjouissant vos oreilles ils attendriront vos cœurs.—BARON DEGÉRANDO. *Rapport à la Société pour l'Enseignement Elémentaire.*

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TABLES OF PROPERTIES PERCEIVABLE BY THE SENSES.

As a specimen of the Tables alluded to in the text, we here subjoin adjectives denoting the principal properties of matter, which are discernible by the senses. Incomplete as these Tables are, they sufficiently show what a valuable stock of information and language may be acquired by young people at an early period of life through observation and judicious exercise of the physical faculties.

The act of investigating, in various objects, the existence or non-existence of the qualities or properties which these adjectives suggest, will enable children to examine things more minutely, and will supply their inquisitive and reflective powers with facts upon which to exercise their activity. On the other hand, the act of ascertaining the exact import of these adjectives by their contrasted signification, by due attention to their prefixes and affixes, by a perception of the properties themselves, and by reference to the respective organs under whose cognisance they come, will not only improve their powers of observation, discrimination, and description, but will also enrich their minds with useful information, and tend to do away with that confusion of terms which is so common in ordinary conversation.

Independently of the general properties which are mentioned here and which belong in common to different objects, there

exists a very considerable number of others which are peculiar to the things they characterise, and which take their names from these very things: thus we say, speaking of colours, *lavender*, *puce*, *flesh*, and *peach colour*, *sky-blue*, *olive-green*, &c.; of forms and other properties cognisable to the sight and feeling, *hairy*, *shaggy*, *woolly*, *scaly*, *oily*, *greasy*, *thorny*, *velvet-like*, &c. The perceptions of hearing, taste, and smelling, vary equally with the endless diversity of things which come under the cognisance of these senses, and are designated by the mention of the objects in which the peculiar property resides.

In contrasting adjectives, in the following Tables, we considered only their proper sense: many of them, if taken figuratively, would admit of other words in opposition. It must, however, be stated that, from the poverty of language in some instances and its superabundance in others, some adjectives having more than one opposite, the professor should explain such anomalies and point out to his pupils their different shades of meaning.

QUALITIES AND PROPERTIES ASCERTAINED BY THE ORGANS OF

SIGHT.	
Visible	invisible.
coloured	colourless.
transparent	opaque.
brilliant, bright	dull.
clear	obscure.
light, lightsome	dark.
clean	dirty.
sublime	ridiculous, burlesque.
magnificent	paltry.
superb	mean, shabby.
beautiful	horrid.
handsome, pretty	ugly.
nice	nasty.
graceful	ungraceful.
blooming	withered.
limpid	muddy.
young	aged, old.
organic	inorganic.
porous	imporous.
compact	loose.
fusible	infusible.

FEELING.	
palpable	impalpable.
tactile	intactible.
tangible	intangible.
warm	cool.
hot	cold.
burning	freezing.
ponderable	imponderable.
ponderous	imponderous.
heavy, weighty	light.
dry	wet.
hard	soft.
rough, rugged	smooth.
strong	weak, frail.
firm	feeble.
solid	liquid.
solid	fluid.
tough	tender.
stale	fresh.
tight, tense	slack.
stiff	flaccid, limber.
compressible	incompressible.
impressible	unimpressible.
accessible	inaccessible.

SIGHT.		FEELING.	
inflammable	uninflammable.	convenient	inconvenient.
combustible	incombustible.	handy	unhandy.
vertical	horizontal.	tenacious	brittle, fragile.
perpendicular	oblique	adhesive	frangible.
uniform	multiform.	commensurable	incommensurable.
solitary	gregarious.	measurable	immeasurable.
septentrional, northern	meridional, southern.	astringent	emollient.
oriental, eastern	occidental, western.	divisible	indivisible.

SIGHT AND FEELING.	
long	short.
wide	narrow.
high	low.
deep	shallow.
thick	thin.
big, large	small.
enormous	exiguous, tiny.
solid	hollow.
full	empty.
delicate	clumsy.
fine	coarse.
even	uneven.
acute	obtuse.
sharp	blunt.
pointed	rounded.
straight	crooked.
moving	still.
movable	immovable.
restless	motionless.
steady	unsteady.
rapid	slow.
flexible, pliant	inflexible.
elastic	inelastic.
permeable	impermeable.
pervious	impervious.
soluble	insoluble.
dissoluble	indissoluble.
malleable	immaleable.
ductile	inductile.

SIGHT AND FEELING.	
FORMS.	PARTS.
rectilinear.	inside.
curve.	interior.
circular.	outside.
semicircular.	exterior.
elliptical.	beginning.
parabolical.	middle.
oval.	centre.
spiral.	end, extremity.
flat.	top.
convex.	bottom.
concave.	summit.
plano-convex.	foot.
angular.	base.
triangular.	front.
quadrangular.	back.
square.	side.
pentagonal.	face.
hexagonal.	right side.
heptagonal.	left side.
octagonal, &c.	wrong side.
polygonal.	circumference.
oblong.	surface.
rectangular.	border.
spherical.	edge.
hemispherical.	brim.
globular.	corner.
spheroidal.	angle.
conical.	solid angle.

Sight and Feeling.		Sight and Feeling.	
destructible	indestructible.	FORMS.	PARTS.
destructive	conservative.	pyramidal.	spheric angle.
contiguous	separate.	cubic.	recentrant angle
adjacent, close	distant.	prismatic.	molecule.
internal	external.	cylindrical.	organs.
superior	inferior.	semi-cylindrical.	limbs.
anterior	posterior.	annular.	head.
divergent	convergent.	tubular.	fibres.
limited	unlimited.		&c. &c.

Hearing.		Taste.	Smelling.
audible	inaudible.	palatable.	odorous.
sonorous	soundless.	unpalatable.	inodorous.
noisy	silent.	tasteless.	odoriferous.
euphonic	cacophonic.	sapid.	fragrant.
musical	unmusical.	insipid.	perfumed.
harmonious	unharmonious.	luscious.	aromatic.
melodious	dissonant.	sweet.	balmy.
concordant	discordant.	sweetish.	musky.
loud	low, faint.	saccharine.	rancid.
high-toned	low-toned.	bitter.	fusty.
ditto	deep-toned.	salt.	fetid.
shrill	obtuse.	saline.	musty.
treble	base.	tart.	
acute (fig.)	grave (fig.)	sour, acid.	
sweet (fig.)	harsh (fig.)	sourish.	
flat (fig.)	sharp (fig.)	acetous.	
articulate	inarticulate.	acrid.	
accented	unaccented.	spicy.	
piano	forte.	peppery.	
legato	staccato.	savoury.	
crescendo	diminuendo.	relishing.	
deafening, stunning	enlivening.	delicious.	
		succulent, juicy.	
grating (fig.)	soothing (fig.)	pungent.	

SEVERAL SENSES.

perceptible	imperceptible.	hurtful	harmless.
distinct	indistinct.	variable	invariable.
simple	complex.	changeable	unchangeable.
elementary	compound.	mutable	immutable.
natural	artificial.	alterable	inalterable.
essential	accidental.	separable	inseparable.
absolute	relative.	penetrable	impenetrable.
generic	specific.	durable, lasting	evanescent.
good	bad.	permanent	transient.
agreeable	disagreeable.	simultaneous	successive.
useful	useless.	coherent	incoherent.
advantageous	disadvantageous.	concrete	abstract.
profitable	unprofitable.	similar	dissimilar.
perfect	imperfect.	valuable	valueless.
complete	incomplete.	intrinsic	extrinsic.
principal	accessary.	sufficient	insufficient.
beneficial	prejudicial.	proper	improper.
important	unimportant.	avoidable	unavoidable. / inevitable.
new	old.	proportionate	disproportionate
common	uncommon.	considerable	inconsiderable.
ordinary	extraordinary.	corruptible	incorruptible.
frequent	rare, infrequent.	imitable	inimitable.
dense	rare.	sensible	insensible.
homogeneous	heterogeneous.	animate	inanimate.
pure	impure.	equal	unequal.
wholesome	unwholesome.		
offensive	inoffensive.		

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ON THE READING OF MODERN BEFORE ANCIENT HISTORY.

"C'est dans les classes supérieures, au milieu des études classiques, qu'il faut placer l'enseignement de l'histoire ancienne, hérissée de tant de difficultés; tandis que l'histoire moderne, et surtout l'histoire nationale, conviennent aux classes inférieures, par la raison qu'elles sont à la fois et plus faciles et plus nécessaires. Chez nous l'inverse a lieu: nous voulons imiter la marche même de l'esprit humain. Mais, comme beaucoup d'enfants ne

vont pas au delà de la quatrième, il arrive qu'ils sortent du collège sachant fort mal l'histoire ancienne, dont ils n'ont que faire et pas du tout l'histoire nationale, qui leur est indispensable et qu'ils pouvaient apprendre facilement."—V. COUSIN. *De l'Instruction publique en Allemagne. Lettre Première.*

"Au risque d'essuyer quelques fines plaisanteries de la part de ceux qui rejettent d'avance tout ce qui ne ressemble pas à ce qu'ils connaissent, oserais-je proposer ici une manière d'enseigner l'histoire, dont j'ai déjà touché un mot ailleurs, et qui aurait, ce me semble, beaucoup d'avantages? Ce serait de l'enseigner *à rebours*, en commençant par les temps les plus proches de nous, et finissant par les plus reculés. Le détail, et, si on peut parler ainsi, le volume des faits décroîtrait à mesure qu'ils s'éloigneraient, et qu'ils seraient parconséquent moins certains et moins intéressants. Un tel ouvrage serait fort utile, surtout aux enfants, dont la mémoire ne se trouverait point surchargée d'abord par des faits et des noms barbares, et rebutée d'avance sur ceux qu'il leur importe le plus de savoir." — D'ALEMBERT. *Mélanges de Littérature et Réflexions sur l'Histoire.*

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STANDARD WORKS ON NATURAL THEOLOGY.

Jos. BUTLER.—The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature.

T. GISBORNE.—The Testimony of Natural Theology to Christianity.

T. CHALMERS.—On the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, as Manifested in the Adaptation of External Nature to the Moral and Intellectual Constitution of Man. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

J. KIDD.—On the Adaptation of External Nature to the Physical Condition of Man, &c. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

W. WHEWELL.—Astronomy and General Physics Considered with Reference to Natural Theology. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

C. BELL.—The Hand: its Mechanism and Vital Endowments as evincing Design. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

P. MARK ROGET.—On Animal and Vegetable Physiology. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

W. BUCKLAND.—Geology Considered with Reference to Natural Theology. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

W. KIRBY.—On the History, Habits, and Instincts of Animals. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

W. PROUT.—Chemistry, Meteorology, and the Functions of the Digestion, Considered with reference to Natural Theology. (*Bridgewater Treatise.*)

W. PALEY.—Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature.

G. COMBE.—The Constitution of Man.

L. S. FÉNÉLON.—Démonstration de l'Existence de Dieu.

LORD BROUGHAM.—A Discourse of Natural Theology, showing the Nature of the Evidence and the Advantages of the Study.

Animal Mechanics, or the Design Exhibited in the Mechanism of the Bones, Muscles, &c. Published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. 1827.

S. CLARKE.—Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.

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EDUCATIONAL APPARATUS.

Skipping-rope, hoop, battledoor and shuttle-cock, &c.

Gymnastic apparatus.

Cabinet-maker and turner's tools, or others.

Black board and slates.

Prismatic colours with their various shades.

Prism, and glasses of different colours.

Arithmetical ball-frame, counters, brass figures.

English and French coins.

Inch-square blocks and cubes for illustrating fractions, and the measurement of superficies and solids.

Fractional apparatus.

Models of geometrical solids; cone with sections.

Architectural game.

English and French measures of length and capacity.

English and French weights, scales; steel-yard.

Square rule, level, plumb-line.

Compasses and callipers.
Dial with revolving hands, sun-dial.
Geographical box.
Black globe, for chalk delineation.
Terrestrial globe with flags.
Atlas of physical geography.
Atlas and pair of globes.
Quadrant, or sextant.
Collections of mineralogical, botanical, and zoological specimens.
A set of mechanical powers.
Models of machinery.
Apparatus for illustrating centrifugal force.
Magnifying-glass, microscope, telescope.
Magic-lantern, kaleidoscope, camera obscura.
Orrery, or planetarium.
Glass model of a pump, syphon, diving-bell.
Air-pump and receivers.
Barometer, thermometer.
Balloon, parachute.
Apparatus for finding specific gravity of bodies.
Apparatus for showing the elasticity of steam.
Chemical apparatus.
Sectional model of a steam-engine.
Mariner's compass, magnet, horse-shoe.
Electrical machine, Leyden jars, discharging rods, &c.
Electrotype apparatus.
Magnetical and galvanic apparatus.
Engravings illustrative of specimens of natural history.
" " the most remarkable phenomena of nature.
" " implements of art, and weapons.
" " the processes of the arts.
" " national costumes and manners.
" " historical facts.
Chronological and synchronical tables of events and sovereigns.
Encyclopædia, biographical and geographical dictionaries, and other books of reference.

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SPECIMEN OF CONVERSATIONS ON OBJECTS.

A person who for the first time attempts to converse with children on objects, may feel embarrassed how to proceed through the various topics which have been adverted to in the text. To remove difficulty on this point, we give here a Table of the different subjects which may be introduced in succession, whatever be the object offered for consideration.

ORDER OF THE SUBJECTS OF CONVERSATION, WITH THE APPROXIMATE AGE AT WHICH THEY MAY BE ENTERED UPON.

"All things are in everything."—JACOTOT.

1.—EXERCISE OF PERCEPTION.

From the age of 6.

- Name of the object; its parts, matter, colour, form and species; numbers, fractions.

2.—EXERCISE OF OBSERVATION.

To be added to the above exercise with children of 8.

- Properties and qualities of the object.
- Comparisons and classifications.
- Use to which the object is, or may be, applied.
- Country from which it comes.
- Mode of production, preparation, or fabrication.

3.—EXERCISE OF REFLECTION.

To be added to the above exercises with children of 10.

- Size, weight, durability, and value of the object.
- Relative positions and distances.
- History of objects, when introduced, and where found.
- Oral description of the object.
- Oral recapitulation of all the subjects which have been treated of in the conversation.

4.—Exercise of Reasoning.

To be added to the above exercises with children of 12.

- To account for everything: Why is the object so named? Why such parts, matter, colours, forms, &c. &c.?
- Distinctions between what is natural and artificial, essential and accidental, absolute and relative, &c. &c.
- Definitions of terms, and their grammatical classification, deduced from their use.
- Written descriptions and recapitulations.

An instructor, with this tabular arrangement before his eyes, can be at no loss for subjects of conversation. However, lest some obscurity should arise from its abridged form, we will endeavour to explain it by a few remarks on a familiar object. We will select for our illustration a *black lead pencil*, as affording by its extreme simplicity an apparently limited field of observations.

Whenever the instructor believes that his young pupils know something of the subject to which their attention is directed, he cautiously questions them, as much to make them take an active part in the lesson as to ascertain their deficiencies, and then he imparts to them the information which he finds they require.

1.

When the object *black lead pencil* has been named, the children are shown its *parts*, which they successively notice and name, viz., *the internal substance,—the black lead; the envelope or external substance,—the wood; the top, the point, the two ends or extremities.* (It so happens that this object has very few parts; others, such as *a book, a house, a ship, a plant, or an animal*, would present a much greater variety.)—*Matter*—the external matter,—*cedar wood*, taken from a tree, *a vegetable substance;* the internal matter,—*black lead, a natural mixture of lead and earth, a mineral substance.* It may be remarked by the instructor that all created things are useful, and that God, in His infinite goodness has endowed us with powers of observation and intellect that we may, by their means, search and discover the use of everything. *Colours—the light brown*, or *cedar colour* of the wood, *the iron*

grey of the lead ;—the children are made to notice that the outward surface of the wood is darker in colour than the part which has been freshly cut: it may be observed here that every colour has an infinite number of shades. (*See the text*, B. IV., p. 247.) *Forms*—when new, a complete cylinder; when ready for use, it is taper, either *conical* or *pyramidal* at one end, and *flat* at the other. (*See the text*, p. 251.) *Species—a writing black lead pencil*, there are other sorts, *drawing-pencils, black* and *red, soft* and *hard* for different uses, *slate pencils, chalk pencils, hair pencils for painting*, &c. Show the children these different species, if possible. *Numbers*—let them reckon all the pencils which they can collect. What is a gross of pencils? By adding or subtracting from each other various collections of pencils, lead pencils, slate pencils, hair pencils, &c., they will experience that addition and subtraction can be declared only of things of the same kind. *Fractions*—let them show the half, the third, &c., of the pencil; if one-third of it should be cut off, how much of it would remain, &c. &c.? (*See the text*, p. 250.) These considerations would suffice for children between six and eight years old.

2.

In addition to what precedes, the following topics will be introduced in conversing with children about eight years old. *Properties*—the pencil is *useful, convenient, graceful*, &c. &c.; the cedar wood is *fibrous, odorous, dull, inflammable*, &c.; the black lead is *bright, inodorous, brittle, uninflammable*, &c. (*See a Table of Properties, note*, 14.) All these facts should be made sensible by experiments, whenever it is practicable, and the words denoting these properties should not be uttered until the latter have been clearly perceived. *Comparisons, &c.*—the children are desired to name objects which resemble the pencil or differ from it in matter, form, colour, usefulness, or various other properties; the counterpart of this exercise would consist in mentioning several objects and desiring the children to discover points of resemblance or contrast with the pencil: for example, a *black lead pencil* and *a candle* are both *cylindrical, dull, odorous, opaque, smooth, inelastic, useful, &c.;* they differ in *colour, smell, taste, feeling;* the former is *infusible*, the latter is *fusible*, one is *porous*, the other *compact*, &c. &c. *Use, &c.*—pencils are used in circumstances when ink cannot be had, particularly in travelling, for taking notes and making sketches from nature, &c. Expatiate on the advantages and pleasure arising from the talent

of drawing. *Country, &c.*—black lead pencils are now made in almost every civilised country; but those made in England have the reputation of being the best. The most celebrated mines of black lead are in Cumberland. Some observations on mines and on the geography of England may be introduced here. Cedar trees, with the wood of which they are usually made, grow in various countries, and especially on Mount Lebanon: this celebrated place would deserve some notice. *Mode of production, &c.*—from the miner who extracted the ore and from the man who set the cedar seed up to the person who sold the pencil, an immense number of trades and tools, which have contributed to its completion, might be enumerated from which the vocabulary of the children would be considerably enlarged.

3.

Young people should now have their reflective powers exercised in reference to the above subjects. They should not only observe things, and state what they perceive, but they should themselves try to discover the facts which are submitted to their consideration, and to express their opinions on them.

Size—What is the length of the pencil, its diameter, and its circumference?—how many times is the pencil longer or shorter than any given object; let them guess and verify how many lengths of the pencil would go to a foot, a yard, &c.? *Weight*—They try with the hand, compare its weight with that of other objects, and verify with scales. The various standard measures should be explained in reference to these little experiments. *Durability*—This question leads to the consideration of the circumstances on which it depends, viz., the manner of using the pencil or of cutting it, the degree of softness of the lead, the industry or indolence, and carefulness or carelessness of the owner, &c. *Value*—The price of pencils is according as they are sold by retail or wholesale, as they are intended for writing or drawing, according to their different qualities. They are cheaper in France than in England. Besides the intrinsic value, a pencil, like any other object, may acquire an accidental or imaginary value from its being the gift of a friend, and especially of a departed friend, from its having belonged to a celebrated person, or from the great need one has of it. Many interesting moral observations may be made in a digression on tokens of friendship, on the admiration due to really great characters, or on the critical position in which persons are sometimes placed, which

makes them attach great value to trifles. The beautiful work of Saintine, "Picciola," is founded on this last idea; the lives of prisoners are full of examples of this kind. The well-known exclamation of *Richard III.*, in Shakspeare,—"My kingdom for a horse!" might also be adduced. *Relative Positions, &c.*:—The pencil may be placed in a vertical, horizontal, or oblique position; it may be parallel or perpendicular to other objects. It may be observed, in passing, that the words vertical and perpendicular ought not to be, as they often are, confounded one with the other; the former indicates only one direction, that which tends towards the centre of the earth, as it is ascertained by the plumb-line; the latter is relative to a second line with which it makes two right angles; its direction may vary indefinitely, according to the direction of that second line. The pencil may form different angles with other objects; it may also be placed at the east or south-east of one thing, whilst it is at the west or north-west of another, &c., thus showing that these are relative terms. End this conversation by desiring the children to describe the pencil so as to give a clear conception of it to a person who may be supposed not to have seen one, and recapitulate all that has been said,—including the digressions to which each point has given rise.

4.

The instructor, in conversing with children of twelve, or over that age, should bring out all their powers of reasoning and of language, in connection with every subject. Why is the black-lead pencil so called? What part of speech is the word *pencil?* What is its derivation? Advert to other grammatical points in reference to substantives. Why has the pencil been given that form or dimension? Why is wood used, and, especially cedar wood? All general practices or customs are founded upon some reason. Why is the outward surface of the wood darker than the inside?—The effects of light and air on matter may be explained. By what mixture of colours could the light brown of the wood be produced? What are the primitive and prismatic colours? Allude to the infinite variety of pleasing colours which are diffused throughout nature, over shells, flowers and minerals, on the wings of the butterfly and plumage of birds, in the broad expanse of the heavens at sunset. How bountiful is the Creator who has thus profusely ministered to the gratification as well as to the wants of his creatures! The same remarks will apply to

the immense diversity of forms and of other sensations. What geometrical figures would be produced by cutting the pencil perpendicularly across, obliquely, or in a way parallel to the axis? In placing the pencil in various positions relatively to other objects, *on* a book, *under* it, *behind* it, &c., almost all the prepositions and their nature can be explained. In enumerating the different kinds of pencils, and the particular qualities or properties which distinguish each kind, a classification will be established; pencil will stand as the *genus*, black-lead pencil, red pencil, slate pencil, &c., as *species*, and the half-worn-out black-lead pencil in hand as the *individual*. The word *pencil* is then said to be a *generic* term, and the words *lead-pencil*, *slate-pencil*, &c., are *specific* terms. In investigating the properties of the pencil, distinctions will be established between them:—the two substances of which it is made are *natural;* their form is *artificial;* the brilliancy of the lead, and the inflammability of the wood are *essential* to these substances: that the pencil is new or old is *accidental;* the characteristics of the wood which constitute it an inanimate, infusible, and opaque substance, are *absolute;* its dimensions, softness, and porosity are *relative*. The expression *vegetable substance*, which applies to the external matter of the pencil, is *generic* relatively to the word *wood*, which is then *specific;* but *wood* becomes *generic* in relation to *cedar*, which is its *specific*. In comparing the pencil with other objects the children will examine in what quality it equals, surpasses, or falls short of other objects. Here might be unfolded the theory of adjectives and the degrees of comparison. (This species of words affords particular facility for eliciting derivations, because many adjectives are borrowed from substantives, while others give rise to substantives; many also are formed by prefixing or affixing some significant syllable to the names of the things whose characteristic properties they signify.) The verbs used to express the various actions performed with a pencil, such as, *to hold it*, *to mend it*, *to write with it*, &c., will elicit the nature and definition of that important part of speech. The particular circumstances of time, place, quantity, and manner which might be mentioned in connection with these actions would serve to illustrate adverbial expressions. In speaking of the use of a pencil, let the children ascertain why it makes a black mark on paper and not on slate, whereas the reverse is the case with a slate pencil, which marks on a slate and not on paper. In mentioning the mode of making pencils and the countries where they are made, many interesting questions could be introduced on

the manufacturing industry of different nations. The superiority of British manufactures in several articles of trade, may be adverted to; but, whilst the instructor thus excites in the breast of his young hearers legitimate feelings of national pride, he must sedulously caution them against any unjust depreciation or contempt of other nations. Finally, every subject may, by the force of association, come within the scope of these conversations. The more extensive the information, and the higher the moral and intellectual character of the instructor, the more beneficial will these lessons be to young people.

The few suggestions which have been offered in this specimen of a conversation on objects will, we hope, be deemed sufficient as a guide for applying to any object this scheme of intellectual training and practical instruction. We have only hinted at the various topics which directly arise from the different modes of considering an object, and have left to the skill and discretion of the instructor the numberless subjects, moral or intellectual, which may branch out of each question, because the advantage of digressions entirely depends on circumstances which he can best appreciate. Every teacher may diverge from the course laid down here, or dilate on such subjects as he feels himself most competent to treat, and on such also as he finds that his pupils desire or require to be informed upon.

Among the works which contain useful hints on some of the subjects adverted to in these conversations, we would particularly notice Pestalozzi's "Manuel des Mères," Dr. Mayo's "Lessons on Objects," C. Knight's "Exercises for the Senses," Richard Dawes's "Suggestive Hints towards Improved Secular Instruction."

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(19) p. 310.

PHONETICAL SLIPS FOR TEACHING TO READ.

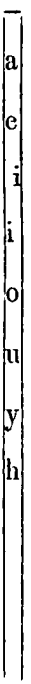
In the following alphabetical classification regard has been had to the syllabical combinations of the English language, consistently with the typographical arrangement which may facilitate the contact of the letters of the different columns, so as to form various syllables and words.

				†				•			
a	a	ee	ai	b	b	c	m	m	br	th	thr
e	e	oo	ei	p	p	s	n	w	pr	ph	phr
i•	i	au	eo	d	d	z	ll	bl	dr	sh	shr
i	o	ea	ia	t	g	l	ff	pl	gr	ch	chr
o	u	oa	ie	v	c	r	tt	gl	cr	gh	scr
u	y	ou	io	f	s	j	fl	cl	sp	kn	spr
y	h	ay	oe	g	r	x	fr	sl	sc	ng	spl
h	j	ey	oi	k	n	y	tr	st	sk	qu	str

• The first *i* is an initial, the second a final letter.
† The consonants of this column represent, two by two, similar articulations or actions of the vocal organs—soft and hard alternately.

The strips of letters in this Table, or others formed of larger letters and similarly arranged, can be cut vertically, and pasted on slips of wood or paste-board of just sufficient breadth to allow the letters of the different columns to form syllables by their juxta-position. See Text, Book iv., p. 310, for the manner of using these slips.

MODEL SLIP.



(20) p. 415.

ON THE INEFFICIENCY OF ETYMOLOGY AS AN AUXILIARY TO THE STUDY OF THE NATIVE TONGUE.

"The derivation of words is not always an index to their true signification. *Artery* means literally *air vessel*, yet it circulates blood; *physiology* is derived from two Greek words, *phusis*, nature, and *logos*, discourse; yet, in English, it is used to designate only the doctrine of animal and vegetable functions. In teaching etymology, therefore, we must often guard the student against the errors into which it would lead him; so that the difficulty of understanding his native tongue is, to that extent, increased by his studies in Greek and Latin..... It makes no difference in the possibility of comprehending the meaning of a word, whether the sound was invented by the English themselves, or borrowed by them from the Greeks or Romans. In learning the meaning of Greek words, the student must connect the thing signified directly with the expression, because he has no etymology to render the Greek intelligible. But if he can comprehend Greek by merely connecting the idea with the word, why may he not learn to understand English by a similar process?"—G. COMBE, *Lectures on Popular Education.*

"It is never from an attention to etymology, which would frequently mislead us, but from custom, the only infallible guide in this matter, that the meanings of words in present use must be learned."—CAMPBELL, *Philosophy of Rhetoric.*

"For my own part, I am strongly inclined to think that the instances are few indeed (if there are, in truth, any instances,) in which etymology furnishes effectual aids to guide us, either in writing with propriety the dialect of our own times, or in fixing the exact signification of ambiguous terms, or in drawing the line between expressions which seem to be nearly equivalent. In all such cases, nothing can, in my opinion, be safely trusted to, but that habit of accurate and vigilant induction, which, by the study of the most approved models of writing and of thinking, elicits gradually and insensibly the precise notions which our best authors have annexed to their phraseology.....

One thing I can state as a fact confirmed by my own observation, so far as it has reached; that I have hardly met with an individual, habitually addicted to etymological studies, who wrote his own language with ease and elegance."—DUGALD STEWART, *Philosophical Essays.*

"Words in the course of time change their meanings, as well as their spellings and pronunciations, and we do not look to etymology for their present meanings. If I should call a man a knave and a villain, he would hardly be satisfied with my telling him that one of the words originally signified only a lad or servant, and the other an under ploughman, or the inhabitant of a village. It is by their present usage only that the meaning of words is to be determined."—B. FRANKLIN, *Works*, vol. ii. p. 363.

"Il est si rare que l'étymologie d'un mot coincide avec sa véritable acception, qu'on ne peut justifier ces sortes de recherches par le prétexte de mieux fixer par là le sens des mots. Les écrivains qui savent le plus de langues sont ceux qui commettent le plus d'impropriétés. Trop occupés de l'ancienne énergie d'un terme, ils oublient sa valeur actuelle et négligent les nuances qui font la grâce et la force du discours."—RIVAROL, *De l'Universalité de la Langue Française.*

"En passant d'une langue à une autre, les mots changent, pour ainsi dire, de patrie; leur ancienne figure, leur première signification s'altère et se décompose: ce serait donc à tort qu'on voudrait tirer de leur origine des inductions positives; c'est un guide qu'on peut consulter, mais qu'on ne doit pas toujours suivre." — FR. GUIZOT, *Dictionnaire universel des Synonymes.*

(21) Vol. ii., p. 97.

ON INTERLINEAL TRANSLATION.

"But, if such a man cannot be got, who speaks good Latin, and, being able to instruct your son in all these parts of knowledge, will undertake it by this method, the next best is to have him taught as near this way as may be, which is by taking some easy and pleasant book, such as 'Æsop's Fables,' and writing the

English translation (made as literal as can be), in one line, and the Latin words which answer each of them, just over it in another. These let him read every day over and over again, till he perfectly understands the Latin ; and then go on to another fable, till he be also perfect in that, not omitting what he is already perfect in, but sometimes reviewing that, to keep it in his memory.

"This being a more imperfect way than by talking Latin unto him ; the formation of the verbs first, and afterwards the declensions of the nouns and pronouns perfectly learned by heart, may facilitate his acquaintance with the genius and manner of the Latin tongue, which varies the signification of verbs and nouns, not as the modern languages do, by particles prefixed, but by changing the last syllables. More than this of grammar I think he need not have till he can read himself Sanctii Minerva, with Scioppius and Perizonius' notes.

"When, by this way of interlining Latin and English one with another, he has got a moderate knowledge of the Latin tongue, he may then be advanced a little farther to the reading of some other easy Latin book, such as Justin or Eutropius : and to make the reading and understanding of it the less tedious and difficult to him, let him help himself, if he please, with the English translation."—LOCKE, *Thoughts concerning Education.*

"L'expérience nous apprend que les enfants sont en état de retenir la signification des mots bien longtemps avant que de pouvoir comprendre les règles, et en faire l'application. La mémoire et l'imagination naissent avec les enfants ; au lieu que le jugement et la raison ne se forment, pour ainsi dire, qu'après eux, et croissent avec leur corps : il faut donc se proportionner à leur état, et commencer par la signification des mots. C'est le plus facile ; nous les trouverons ensuite tout disposés aux règles, et nous les rendrons plus aisément fermes sur les principes. A l'égard de ce que Mr. Rollin ajoute, 'qu'il faut quelqu' auteur facile, aller d'abord très lentement, ranger exactement tous les mots dans leur ordre naturel, &c.,' toutes ces pratiques s'observent avec incomparablement plus d'exactitude et d'utilité par l'interprétation interlinéaire que par l'explication de vive voix ; avec cette seule différence, qu'au lieu d'aller d'abord très lentement, ce qui dégoûte les enfants qui sont curieux et vifs, on va d'abord très vite, parcequ'on ne s'arrête qu'à la signification des mots, sauf à revenir, et on revient toujours plus avancé.

"La seule interprétation interlinéaire, jointe au texte pur de l'auteur latin, procure les avantages dont parle Rollin. Les auteurs les plus difficiles deviennent des livres composés exprès pour les enfants qui commencent, et des livres clairs et faciles où les mots sont rangés dans leur ordre naturel, où dans les premiers temps il ne faut point chercher l'élégance, où les enfants trouvent la netteté, la propriété des termes et leur signification ; où ils puisent une abondante provision de mots latins, dont ils retiennent bien mieux la signification que s'ils les entendaient expliquer de vive voix ; où ils s'accoutument aux différentes constructions ; où ils appliquent les règles de la syntaxe ; et quand les enfants ont fait des progrès dans le latin rangé selon l'ordre de la syntaxe simple, lorsqu' enfin le sens littéral et la signification des mots qu'ils ont à expliquer ne les embarrassent plus, ils trouvent dans le texte pur toute l'exactitude et toute l'élégance de la syntaxe figurée qui est le langage ordinaire." — DUMARSAIS, *Exposition d'une Méthode Raisonnée.*

"La version interlinéaire imaginée par M. Dumarsais est sans doute la meilleure méthode pour enseigner une langue . . . . Je suivis pendant quelques mois la méthode de M. Dumarsais ; mais je l'abandonnai lorsque le prince put se passer de ce secours, c'est-à-dire lorsqu'il eut appris beaucoup de mots latins, et qu'il se fût familiarisé avec la syntaxe de cette langue."—CONDILLAC, *Cours d'Etude. Motif des Etudes.*

"M. Dumarsais n'a pas de peine à montrer les avantages de sa méthode sur la méthode ordinaire. Les inconvéniens de celle-ci sont de parler aux enfants de cas, de modes, de concordance, et de régime sans préparation, et sans qu'ils puissent sentir l'usage de ce qu'on leur fait apprendre ; de leur donner ensuite des règles de syntaxe très composées, dont on les oblige de faire l'application en mettant du français en latin ; de vouloir forcer leur esprit à produire, dans un tems où il n'est destiné qu'à recevoir ; de les fatiguer en cherchant à les instruire ; et de leur inspirer le dégoût de l'étude, dans un âge où l'on ne doit songer qu'à la rendre agréable. En un mot, dans la méthode ordinaire on enseigne le latin à-peu-près comme un homme qui, pour apprendre à un enfant à parler, commencerait par lui montrer la mécanique des organes de la parole ; M. Dumarsais imite au contraire celui qui enseignerait d'abord à parler, et qui expliquerait ensuite la mécanique des organes. . . . .

"Rien ne paraît plus philosophique que la méthode de Dumarsais, rien de plus conforme au développement naturel de l'esprit ; et de plus propre à abréger les difficultés. Mais elle avait deux grands défauts : elle était nouvelle ; elle contenait de plus une critique de la manière d'enseigner qu'on pratique encore parmi nous, et que la prévention, la paresse, l'indifférence pour le bien public s'obstinent à conserver, comme elles conservent tant d'autres abus sous le nom d'usage." — D'ALEMBERT, *Eloge de Dumarsais.*

"Dumarsais avait été vivement frappé du tems si inutilement employé à chercher les mots dans le dictionnaire, de la difficulté qu'avaient les commençants de les y trouver, et surtout de l'insuffisance ainsi que du danger de cet instrument si propre à meubler l'imagination de fausses idées, tout y étant présenté abstractivement et sans appui.

"Il organisa donc une méthode, aujourd'hui connue dans toute l'Europe sous le nom de *traductions interlinéaires.* Il trouva sur sa route tous les pédans aux quels étaient mêlés quelques hommes de qui l'on devait mieux espérer.

"Au milieu de ces attaques, la nouvelle méthode faisait des progrès rapides. Condillac et avec lui tous les esprits justes l'honorèrent de leurs suffrages." — LEMARE, *Cours de Langue Latine.*

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(22) Vol. ii., p. 138.

COURSE OF FRENCH READING.

The most popular works in the different walks of literature and science in the French language, have been classified here according to the nature of the subject and approximately arranged in the order in which they may be read. This double classification will enable students to suit their reading to their capacity and different degrees of proficiency, to familiarise themselves with every word and every style, to extend their acquaintance with the language and enrich their minds with knowledge.

Didactic works of general interest have alone been introduced in the following list ; for it is obvious that treatises intended for the special study and advancement of the learned professions, or for the minute and thorough investigation of any department of

science, could not find a place in a general course of reading. The immense progress made by the French, both in the exact and the physical sciences, affords to learners ample means of prosecuting their scientific studies ; but, for the selection of the works most conducive to the attainment of the object they have in view, they must consult persons eminent in the respective branches of knowledge which they pursue.

TALES, ANECDOTES, HISTORICAL NOVELS, AND OTHER WORKS OF IMAGINATION.

1.—Third Period of Youth.

L'Ami des Enfants.—Le Petit Grandisson. Berquin.
Magasin des Enfants. Mme. Leprince de Beaumont.
Contes à ma Fille.—Contes à mes Petites Amies. N. Bouilly.
Les Veillées du Château.—Théâtre d'Education. Mme. Genlis.
Conseils aux Jeunes Filles. Mme. Campan.
Une Famille.—Nouveaux Contes. Mme. Guizot.
Aristide et Idalie, ou les Vertus Filiales. Mme. Delafaye-Bréhier.
Céline, ou l'Influence d'un Beau Caractère. Mme. Manceau.
Sagesse et Bonheur.—Devoir et Récompense. J. B. S. Champagnac.
Les Bienfaits de l'Adversité. Steph. de la Madelaine.
Etienne et Valentin. Mlle. Ulliac de Trémadeure.
Contes aux Jeunes Agronomes,—aux Jeunes Naturalistes, &c. Do.
Conseils à ma Fille.—Encouragements de la Jeunesse. N. Bouilly.
Elisabeth, ou les Exilés de Sibérie. Mme. Cottin.
La Jeune Sibérienne.—Les Prisonniers du Caucase. X. de Maistre.
Le Lépreux de la Cité d'Aoste. Do.
L'Ecolier, ou Raoul et Victor. Mme. Guizot.
Paul et Virginie.—La Chaumière Indienne. B. de St. Pierre.
Numa Pompilius.—Guillaume Tell. Florian.
Nouvelles.—Gonzalve de Cordoue. Do.
Le Siège de la Rochelle.—Zuma, &c. Mme. Genlis.
Les Incas, ou la Conquête du Pérou. Marmontel.
Ourika. Duchesse de Duras.
La Dot de Suzette. I. Fiévée.
Promenades dans le Vieux Paris. Le Bibliophile Jacob (P. Lacroix.)
Bernard de Palessy. Mme. S. W. Belloc.

Le Village sous les Sables. FOUINET.
Allan (*Couronné par l'Académie*). Do.

2.—FOURTH PERIOD OF YOUTH.

Mathilde—Claire d'Albe. MME. COTTIN.
L'Ecrivain Public. S. PANNIER.
Mlle. Clermont.—Mlle. Lavallière.—Mme. de Maintenon. GENLIS.
Raoul, ou l'Enéide. MME. DE BAWR.
Lettres d'une Péruvienne. MME. GRAFFIGNY.
Atala.—René.—Les Aventures du dernier Abencerage. CHÂTEAUBRIAND.
Adolphe. BENJ. CONSTANT.
Adèle de Sénange.—Eugène de Rothelin. MME. DE SOUZA.
La Princesse de Clèves. MME. DE LAFAYETTE.
Lettres Choisies. MME. DE SÉVIGNÉ, MME. MAINTENON.
L'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin.—Le Franc-Parleur. JOUY.
Paris, ou le Livre des Cent-et-un.
Mlle. de Liron. DELÉCLUZE.
Gil Blas. LESAGE.
Télémaque. FÉNÉLON.
Corinne. MME. DE STAËL.
Charles Barimore. COMTE DE FORBIN.
Cinq Mars (*historique*).—Servitude et Grandeur Militaire. ALFRED DE VIGNY.
Alonzo. SALVANDY.
Valérie. MME. DE KRÜDNER.
Picciola. X. B. SAINTINE.
Le Peintre de Salsbourg.—Thérèse Aubert.—Trilby.—Jean Sbogar. CH. NODIER.
Sous les Tilleuls. A. KARR.
Le Vicomte de Béziers (*historique*). F. SOULIÉ.
Daniel le Lapidaire. MICHEL MASSON.
Notaire de Chantilly.—Les Méandres. LÉON GOZLAN.
Les Tourelles, ou les Châteaux de France (*historique*). Do.
Jacqueries (*histor.*)—La Mosaïque.—Colomba. PROSPER MÉRIMÉE.
André, Histoire d'un Marin. FERDINAND DENIS.
Romans pour servir à l'Histoire de France. BIBLIOPHILE JACOB (P. LACROIX).

Les Derniers Bretons (*historique*)—Riche et Pauvre, &c. EMILE SOUVESTRE.

Abasvérus, ou le Juif errant. EDGAR QUINET.

Madeleine. JULES SANDEAU.

Eugénie Grandet—Le Médecin de Campagne. BALZAC.

Mauprat—Les Maîtres Mosaïstes—La Marc au Diable—Lavinia.—La Petite Fadette. G. SAND (DUDEVANT).

Le Château de St. Germain. MME. REYBAUD.

La Conspiration de Cellamare. VATOUT.

Le Commandeur de Malte—Le Marquis de Létorière. EUGÈNE SUE.

Les Trois Mousquetaires—Vingt ans Après—Le Vicomte de Bragelone—La Dame de Monsoreau (*histor.*)—Le Chevalier D'Harmantal (*histor.*) Isabel de Bavière (*histor.*)—Une Fille du Régent (*histor.*) Le Capitaine Paul (*maritime*)—Le Comte de Monte-Cristo. A. DUMAS.

Notre Dame de Paris. VICTOR HUGO.

VOYAGES, TRAVELS, BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY.

THIRD AND FOURTH PERIODS.

Cours d'Histoire Racontée aux Enfans et à la Jeunesse. LAMÉ FLEURY.

Soirées d'Hiver. DEPPING.

Alfred, ou le Jeune Voyageur en France. MARLÈS.

L'Hermite de Chimboraço. C. H. MIRVAL.

Lettres sur la Mythologie. DEMOUSTIER.

Voyages autour du Monde. DE LAPÉROUSE, DE DURVILLE.

Voyage en Perse. CHARDIN.

Voyage en Afrique. LEVAILLANT.

Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem. CHATEAUBRIAND.

Voyage en Amérique. Do.

Voyage en Orient. A. DE LAMARTINE.

Voyage aux Pyrénées. RAMOND.

Voyage dans les Alpes. DE SAUSSURE.

Voyages en Italie et en Suisse. SIMOND.

Impressions de Voyage. A. DUMAS.

Correspondance d'Orient. MICHAUD ET POUJOULAT.

Voyages d'Anténor en Grèce et en Asie. LANTIER.

Séthos. TERRASSON.

Voyages du Jeune Anacharsis. BARTHÉLÉMY.

Voyage de Polyclète ou Lettres Romaines. THÉIS.

Rome au Siècle d'Auguste, &c. CH. DESOBRY.

Charles XII.—Histoire de la Russie sous Pierre le Grand. VOLTAIRE.

Histoire Ancienne (Edition de Letrone). ROLLIN.

Histoire Universelle. PHIL. DE SÉGUR.

Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle. BOSSUET.

Histoire des Empereurs Romains. CREVIER.

Révolutions de Suède,—de Portugal,—Romaines. VERTOT.

Grandeur et Décadence des Romains. MONTESQUIEU.

Conjuration contre Vénise. SAINT RÉAL.

Histoire de France (Nouvelle Edition). HENRI MARTIN.

Histoire de France. MICHELET.

Histoire des Français. SIM. DE SISMONDI.

Histoire des Français. THÉOPH. LAVALLÉE.

Lettres sur l'Histoire de France. AUGUSTIN THIERRY.

Essais sur l'Histoire de France. FR. GUIZOT.

Histoire de la Civilisation en France. Do.

Histoire des Français des Divers Etats. MONTEIL.

Histoire des Gaulois. AMÉDÉE THIERRY.

Histoire de la Gaule Méridionale sous la Domination des Germains. FAURIEL.

De la Philosophie Chrétienne chez les Francs. OZANAM.

Histoire de Philippe Auguste. CAPEFIGUE.

Histoire de France sous Louis Treize. A. BASIN.

Siècles de Louis XIV et de Louis XV. VOLTAIRE.

Histoire de la Fronde. ST. AULAIRE.

Port-Royal. SAINTE-BEUVE.

Mémoires du Duc de St. Simon.

Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages de Lafontaine. DE VALKENAER.

Histoire de la Vie de Molière. TASCHEAU.

Eloges et Mélanges. MIGNET.

Histoire de la Révolution Française de 1789 à 1814. MIGNET.

Histoire de la Révolution Française. LACRETELLE JEUNE.

Histoire de la Révolution Française. A. THIERS.

Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire. Do.

Histoire des Girondins.—Do. de la Restauration. A. DE LAMARTINE.

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Théâtre de DUCIS, V. HUGO, JOUY, ALF. DE VIGNY, AL. DUMAS.

Œuvres Poétiques de GRESSET, MILLEVOYE, MALFILÂTRE, ANDRIEUX, ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

Œuvres Poétiques de Mesdames DUFRESNOY, DESBORDE-VALMORE, TASTU.

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Les Orientales.—Les Feuilles d'Automne.—Les Rayons et les Ombres. V. HUGO.

Méditations Poétiques.—Harmonies.—Jocelyn. A. DE LAMARTINE.

Moïse.—Eloa. ALFRED DE VIGNY.

Divine Epopée. SOUMET.

Many works on literature contain, on the nature and merit of literary and scientific compositions, critical remarks which may guide the anxious student in his reading: among those which are best calculated to accomplish this object, we may mention the following:—

Histoire Littéraire de la France avant le 12ᵉ Siècle. J. J. AMPÈRE.

Lycée, ou Cours de Littérature. J. F. LAHARPE.

Cours de Littérature Française. VILLEMAIN.

Critiques et Portraits Littéraires. SAINTE-BEUVE.

Tableau Anecdotique de la Littérature Française depuis François I. J. JANIN.

Tableau Littéraire de la France au 18ᵉ Siècle. EUS. SALVERTE.

De la Littérature de la France pendant le 18ᵉ Siècle. DE BARANTE.

Tableau Historique de la Littérature Française depuis 1789. J. CHÉNIER.

Histoire de la Littérature Française. DÉSIRÉ NISARD.

Cours de Littérature Dramatique. ST. MARC-GIRARDIN.

Modern French Literature. L. RAYMOND DE VÉRICOUR.

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A DIATONIC TABLE OF THE FRENCH ELEMENTARY VOCAL SOUNDS.

Treble.	*Tenor.*	*Bass.*
a	â	an.
e	eu	„
è	é	„
i	„	in.
o	ô	on.
u	ou	un.

This Table, consisting of the fifteen alphabetical signs, simple and compound, which represent the fifteen elementary vocal sounds of the French pronunciation, exhibits not only the relative elevation or depression of the vocal notes, but also their relative quantity,—the treble column consisting of the shortest and the bass column of the longest sounds.

The characteristic feature of the French pronunciation being fulness and slowness, its sounds admit of an additional length, which is marked, in its written signs, by the circumflex accent. This accent is, therefore, only a mark of quantity, and does not indicate, except in the case of *a* and *o*, a change in the sound: thus *ê* is nothing but *è* pronounced long; *î* is long *i*, and *û* is long *u*. The unaccented *e*, which, although constituting a syllable, as illustrated in the metrical system of French versification, is generally silent in ordinary speaking. This has the effect of again increasing the number of long sounds; because, when it is not pronounced, the preceding syllable is lengthened, to make up for the loss of the syllable in which the silent *e* enters.

The letters given horizontally in this Table represent sounds of the same nature, and are pronounced with the same opening of the mouth: they may be said to be similar sounds in different intonations; thus *â* is graver and lower than *a*, and *an* graver and lower than *â*; and so on with the others. But the letters, in their vertical arrangement, represent sounds completely distinct one from the other and produced with different openings of the

mouth: *a*, *â*, *an*, demand the widest opening; and the lips gradually close in descending from these to *u*, *ou*, *un*, which last sounds require the mouth to be nearly shut. It is probably this gradual closing of the lips in pronouncing the primary vocal sounds which has given rise to the order assigned to the vowels in the alphabet.

That the bass sounds, in French, are in a minority, as seen in this Table, is consistent with euphonical requirement. It is by their contrast with the more pleasing sounds of the first and second columns that they derive the power of contributing to the musical effect of the language. Hence we see that French pronunciation, although destitute of the syllabic accent, possesses all the elements of lingual melody,—diversity of sound, intonation, and quantity.

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ON DOUBLE TRANSLATION.

"Having opened a school when I was very young, and not yet taught by experience what way to begin and much less how to proceed, I gave the boys, from time to time, some passages to be translated from their native tongue into Latin, which I thought would be of great use for exercising them in the rules of grammar. In reading over these exercises, I found fault not so much in the grammar, as in the choice of words and phrases. On considering the causes of this more closely, I discovered that one reason why the boys fell into these mistakes was owing to my own conduct in giving them dictionaries to use before they could have got any choice even of words from the reading and observation of authors; but that another reason was to be attributed to the lexicographers, who, chiefly in that part where the English is put before the Latin, did not distinguish and explain the ambiguities of words and phrases that occur in both languages; or did not give the proper meaning of words suitable to the genius of each language; or did not arrange them in proper order, according to their fitness and purity, but mingled them together, as if they were all classical and correct. For it often happens, that, when a boy finds several words denoting the same thing, those that belong to the middle ages are placed first in the dictionary, while the purest and choicest words are thrown

into the middle, and even sometimes thrust into the lowest place. Hence it happens, that, while boys have no certain pole-star to direct them in making a choice, there is no wonder they should very frequently strike against rocks. But that I might secure the boys from my own mistakes, as well as that of the lexicographers, I proceeded for some time in another way, which I do not know if anybody else at that time had adopted: this was to give them short lessons from good authors, which I read over to them first of all once or twice, sometimes three or four times, and, then, having explained them in as clear and common words as I could, I ordered my scholars to translate them into English, and afterwards to turn them back again into Latin, without the assistance of a dictionary or the author, both of which I took away: but, at the same time, I told them to do it in the very words and order of the author, as far as they could remember. I had no reason to repent of this method; for, in the first place, I got the boys to be much more attentive to the lessons I dictated, that they might be able to do their task more easily; while, at the same time, they improved every day in the composition both of Latin and English, perceiving more clearly the remoteness between them, and how far the one differs from the other: secondly, I drew them off from the improper use of wrong words and phrases, and smoothed and strengthened the way to the purity of both languages; lastly, what is of no small moment, I sharpened and confirmed their memory by assiduous exercises of this kind."—*Translated extract from Preface to* AINSWORTH'S *Latin Dictionary.*

"Faire un thème, c'est chercher dans la langue qu'on ignore les moyens de rendre les paroles de la langue qu'on sait; faire une version, c'est employer la langue qu'on sait à expliquer celle qu'on ignore. Lequel des deux offre le plus de facilité et de probabilité d'instruction? Du reste, le genre de thèmes que propose Diderot me paraît le seul qui puisse avoir quelqu'utilité.

"C'est une grande question que de savoir si la seule étude des langues anciennes vaut le tems qu'on y consacre, et si cette époque précieuse de la jeunesse ne pourrait pas être employée à des occupations plus importantes. Soit raison, soit préjugé, je croirai difficilement qu'on puisse se passer de la connaissance des anciens. Mais je pense que l'étude des langues anciennes pourrait être abrégée considérablement.

"Je proposerai pour les thèmes et les versions les méthodes suivantes :

1° Traduire les bons auteurs, ou faire la version.

2° Composer, ou faire le thème d'après la méthode suivante—

"Prendre une page traduite d'un bon auteur ou dans sa langue, ou dans quelqu'autre langue qu'on sache. Rendre cette page traduite dans la langue de l'auteur, et comparer sa traduction avec le texte original. C'est ainsi qu'on apprend les mots, la syntaxe, et qu'on saisit l'esprit d'une langue qui s'établit dans la mémoire par la lecture et par l'écriture."—F. GUIZOT, *Annales de l'Education. Tome* VI.

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ON LATIN EXERCISES AND THEMES.

"Figurez-vous cet enfant dont les progrès vous sont chers, tantôt cloué sur une syntaxe inintelligible, tantôt égaré dans les détours d'un lugubre dictionnaire, où il ne trouve point ce qu'il cherche, et où ce qu'il trouve le remplit de perplexités. S'il veut en faire l'application à sa matière, il y a tant de procédés à observer, tant de dangers à éviter, qu'il ne sait où il en est. Le choix du verbe, la voix, le mode, le tems, le nombre, la personne, tout cela débrouillé, il ne tient qu'un mot. Nouvelles méditations sur le suivant. Le pauvre enfant ne voit que des précipices, et en se détournant de l'un il donne tête baissée dans un autre.

"S'il est sans facilité, ou trop plein de feu, comment voulez-vous qu'il suive avec présence d'esprit tout ce menu détail de préceptes qui le troublent, ou le morfondent? Jamais il ne s'en tirera ; et six ans se passeront ou à travailler à contre-cœur, ou à trouver les moyens de se dérober au travail. . . . Malgré la conformité de ses dernières compositions aux ordonnances de la grammaire, il en sera de lui comme de beaucoup d'autres qui, avec un bon fonds d'esprit et grande provision de règles, sortent du collège sans savoir le latin. De mille personnes qui ont fait leurs études, je veux qu'il y en ait cinquante qui puissent le parler avec justesse, et deux cents qui l'entendent; c'est beaucoup accorder. Si les huit cents autres ne peuvent ni le parler

ni l'entendre, ce n'est point faute de thèmes et d'ennui."—PLUCHE, *Mécanique des Langues.*

"Dans la méthode des thèmes que de tems perdu! il faut dicter le français, en faire les parties souvent contraires à celles du latin, construire les phrases, chercher les règles, les exceptions, trouver le mode, le tems, &c. L'état d'un mot est-il réglé, il faut recommencer le même travail pour un second; il faut feuilleter long-tems son dictionnaire, et souvent inutilement: ce travail disgracieux doit revenir tous les jours et durer plusieurs années. Aussi y a-t-il peu d'écoliers assez patients pour y tenir. Delà que de coups de tête de la part des écoliers! que de chagrins pour les parents! que de sujets perdus pour la société! Au lieu qu'un livre élémentaire (de traduction) fournit un ouvrage suivi et aisé à lire, la version mot à mot en montre la signification dans les deux langues; les terminaisons et les formes de chaque mot annoncent les difficultés grammaticales, et les découvrent avec le secours des questions que nous proposons pour les trouver. Par ce moyen on en voit plus en six mois qu'on n'en verrait en un an par la méthode des thèmes.

"L'usage des thèmes a encore un inconvénient: c'est que les enfans par la méthode ordinaire, ne voient dans le cours de leurs études que peu d'ouvrages latins; au lieu que ceux qui ont suivi la méthode que nous proposons, ayant toujours été appliqués à la traduction des auteurs latins, tourneront le français en latin avec beaucoup plus de facilité et de succès. Si, en rhétorique et en philosophie, un écolier parle bien latin ou fait un bon thème, il doit cet avantage aux auteurs latins qu'il a lus; par conséquent il doit tout à la version. Qu'on interroge les maîtres eux-mêmes, ils diront que pour donner des thèmes corrects, ils ont deux choses à faire: l'un d'éloigner de leur esprit l'idée des règles, des rudiments, autrement leur latin serait aussi pitoyable que celui de leurs écoliers; l'autre de se rappeler les phrases et les tours qu'ils ont remarqués dans les auteurs latins."—WANDELAINCOURT, *Methode Latine.* "*Introduction.*"

"De tous les exercices que l'usage a autorisés, il n'y en a peut-être point qui fasse moins d'honneur à l'esprit humain que celui-là. . . . La voie des thèmes pour commencer était si désapprouvée que l'Université n'indique pas une seule méthode qui y ait rapport: et il n'est pas concevable comment cet usage a pu continuer, n'étant surtout fondé que sur une infinité de règles fausses, réfutées par les plus célèbres grammairiens.

"La traduction est de toutes les routes la principale à laquelle il faut nécessairement d'abord s'attacher. . . . . Il est constant qu'on peut apprendre la langue latine par la voie de la traduction, en moitié moins de tems qu'on n'en met à l'apprendre par la voie de la composition du français en latin."—CHOMPRÉ, *Manière d'Enseigner ou d'Etudier la Langue Latine.*

"Ne faut-il pas [pour écrire les thêmes] bien de l'attention et de l'étendue d'esprit pour appliquer la règle, et plus encore pour le choix des mots? On est obligé de chercher ces mots dans un dictionnaire; il faut deviner celui qui convient à la phrase particulière, démêler le terme propre d'avec le figuré;—en un mot savoir ce qu'on n'a point encore appris; aussi, n'est-ce qu'au bout de cinq ou six ans que l'on commence à faire des thèmes supportables? Si, au lieu de cet exercice aussi pénible qu'inutile, et dans la forme et dans le fond, on avait passé la moitié de ces années à apprendre des mots latins et à expliquer les auteurs selon la traduction littérale, en remarquant avec soin la différence qui se trouve entre le tour latin et le tour français; n'est-il pas évident que l'on tournerait alors le français en latin avec bien plus de facilité et de succès?"—DUMARSAIS, *Exposition d'une Méthode raisonnée pour Apprendre la Langue Latine.*

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